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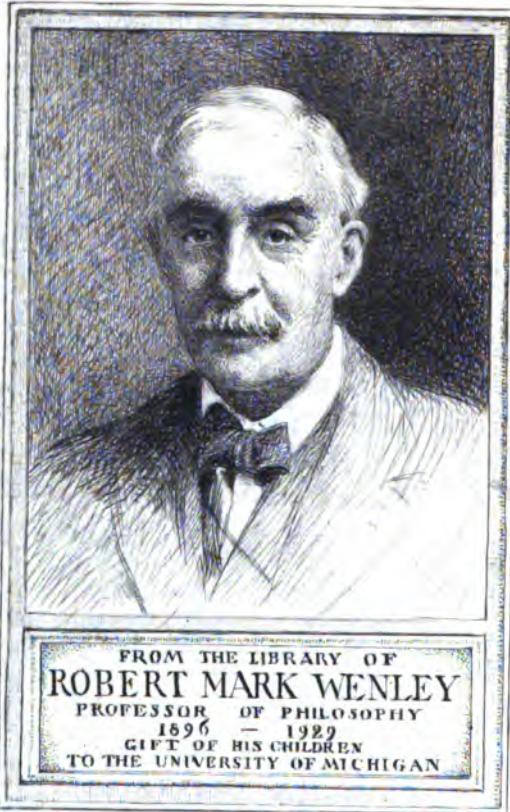
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ECCE MESSIAS;

OR,

**THE HEBREW MESSIANIC HOPE AND
THE CHRISTIAN REALITY.**

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

The Spirit of the Bible ; or, the Nature and Value of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures discriminated, in an Analysis of their several Books. 2 vols. 8vo. 15s. E. T. Whitfield. (Second Edition.)

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ECCE MESSIAS;

OR,

THE HEBREW MESSIANIC HOPE

AND

THE CHRISTIAN REALITY.

BY

EDWARD HIGGINSON,

AUTHOR OF

THE "SPIRIT OF THE BIBLE," &c.



WILLIAMS AND NORGATE,

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PREFACE.

The title of this book will probably recall the Revue Thomé of a few years past, and also the various limitations and anticipations which that book elicited; as the Revue Thomé, Revue Augustin, Revue Scandinave, &c. It seems strange that the great scriptural *All-hail Mæssias!* should not have been put forth in that sequence; for this is pre-eminently the scriptural theme respecting Jesus of Nazareth. "We have found the Mæssias (which is, being interpreted, the Christ)," was the idea under which his first disciples attached themselves to him. "I know that Mæssias cometh (which is called Christ); when he become he will tell us all things," was the Samaritan woman's statement of the prevailing expectation. "What think ye of the Christ?" "Of a truth this is the Prophet;" "This is the Christ;" "When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than those which this man hath done?" were the spoken meanings about him and his mission; "Shall Christ come out of Galilee?" being the chief prejudice against him at first; and the question how the "Son of Man should be lifted up," when "the Christ abideth for ever," being the final difficulty with the expectants of a temporal Mæssianic kingdom.

What, then, was the Jewish expectation as shown in the Old Testament, and what the Christian realization as claimed in the New? Is the Christ of history an adequate fulfillment of the Hebrew hope? To this investigation the present volume is devoted.

It is no new subject of inquiry with the author ; and the revival of intelligent religious discussion in England has led him to put into writing the mature thoughts of many years, in the hope of contributing to a reasonable and reverent opinion on the subject.

The purpose of this volume is not ambitious. It does not appeal to the professional theologian so much as to the diligent and thoughtful reader of the Bible ; and that on a subject of very general interest to such readers. Its aim is (so to speak) to concentrate, as with a kind of theological lens, the many scattered rays of scriptural light, upon the Jewish and Christian doctrines respecting the Messiah.

One of the chief difficulties felt in studying the Scriptures (by all readers except thorough biblical scholars) is the want of chronological order in their arrangement in the Common Bible. And in no part, either of the Old Testament or the New, is this difficulty more seriously felt than in the case of the Hebrew Prophets, with whose writings the present subject is largely concerned. In the Historical books of the Old Testament, the order of time is in the main observed, of course ;—a duplicate history occurring, however, in certain periods. But in the Didactic and Devotional books, including most especially the Prophetical writings, the disregard to historical order of arrangement is sadly felt. The largest four of these books in point of quantity—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel—are, through mere measurement of their contents, called the Greater Prophets, and placed first ; and then follow twelve others, called the Minor Prophets, merely because their writings are shorter ; and all are put together without the slightest attempt at orderly arrangement, nay, notoriously out of chronological order, except that the last two in the Old Testament probably were the latest, at least of the twelve Minor prophets.

Confusion is inevitable in the mind of the plain reader. He reads of the predicted captivity of the Northern kingdom (Israel) by the Assyrians ; then that of the Southern kingdom (Judah) in Babylon (to happen 134 years after) ; then he finds himself carried back again amidst Assyrian affairs ;—and thus to and fro repeatedly ;—while the affairs of other neighbouring nations also are introduced, often without historical clue ; and throughout he is perplexed to know (especially if he reads the modern *headings* of the chapters) whether the prophet anticipates the temporal restoration of the captives to their own land within a short time, or the opening of the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah some five or six hundred years later ; or whether he expects something intermediate and different from both those realities of history.

The Bible is now well understood to be a collection of many books, of various kinds and various degrees of value, written at very different periods ; and one of the greatest helps to its intelligent study would be, to place those books and their various parts (for some of the books are themselves composite) in chronological order as nearly as possible.

Something has been done for this purpose, as regards particular books of the Bible, by recent theologians, even in England. Thus, the Epistles of Paul have been put into their probable order of composition, in connection with the history of the Acts of the Apostles, in the full and comprehensive volumes of Conybeare and Howson.* And this arrangement of Paul's Epistles is the chief chronological adjustment required as regards the New Testament. In the Old Testament, an attempt has been lately made by four laymen to reduce the book of Psalms† to a

* Life and Epistles of St. Paul. 2 vols. 4to. Longmans, 1854.

† The Psalms, chronologically arranged by Four Friends. Macmillan, 1867.

probable historical order ;—in which undertaking, however, there is, of course, a great deal of room for conjecture, and much for modest doubt. A translation of the Minor Prophets by Archbishop Newcome* long ago, and a more recent one of all the Prophets by the American divine Dr. Noyes,† have put these books into their probable order ; and so does the translation of the Prophets of the Assyrian and Babylonian periods by the late Dr. Rowland Williams,‡ published in part by himself and in part since his sudden and premature death, but still irreversibly wanting the Prophets of the Persian period and the Return of the Exiles.

As regards the Hebrew Prophets, the present volume does far less in one respect, and attempts something more in another, than these learned books. It does less, as it does not reproduce the *whole* of the prophetic writings, but only those parts which bespeak, or seem to bespeak, the Messianic hope. It attempts more in another respect, by collecting *all the Messianic passages* of the Old Testament and Apocrypha in their believed order of production, and endeavouring to represent their natural meaning in plain English. It then traces the corresponding thread of thought and narrative through the New Testament.

Happily it is not necessary at the present day,—when a *Revision* of the English Bible has been undertaken by Convocation, and the *Speaker's Commentary* is in process of publication,—to plead for the right of varying from the Common Version. Its excellence is acknowledged more heartily, because more discriminately, than ever ; while its frequent imperfections and

* An Attempt towards an Improved Version of the Twelve Minor Prophets. 1819.

† New Translation of the Hebrew Prophets arranged in Chronological Order. Boston, Munroe, 1843.

‡ The Hebrew Prophets translated afresh from the Original. Williams and Norgate, 1866 and 1871.

obscurities, evident to every intelligent reader, are sufficiently explained by the date of its production.

I can indeed lay no claim to personal authority, as a critical translator, while endeavouring to find truer expression for the Hebrew ideas. I have therefore ventured upon no translations of my own (but only an occasional note, or suggestion in brackets); and have adhered to the Authorized English Version in the main, never leaving it except for what seemed the expression of a clearer, more vigorous or more appropriate sense. This is the extent of my pretensions as compiler of an eclectic translation. And I could in every instance cite good scholarly authority for the rendering which I have adopted. But to have quoted it in each instance, would have been tedious to the mind and perplexing to the eye of the reader, while very cumbersome to the page. The principal translations and commentaries to which I have been indebted, besides those already named, are mentioned below.*

The version thus produced, though composite as regards its sources, and freely varying from the common English Bible, will not, I believe, be found to savour of modern or strange speech, by those with whom (as with myself) the phraseology of King James's translators forms the standard of good English in sacred composition, and to a great extent in secular. I have tried to bring out a true and clear sense, but without change of style.

* The Old Version of the Psalms, as preserved in the Book of Common Prayer.

The Douay (Romish) Version of the Old Testament.

Grotius : *Annotata ad Vetus Testamentum.*

Rosenmüller : *Scholia in Vetus Testamentum.*

Bishop Lowth : *New Translation of Isaiah.*

Thomas Wintle : *Daniel, an Improved Version attempted.* 1792.

Holy Scriptures of the Old Covenant : *Revised Translation, by C. Wellbeloved, G. V. Smith and J. S. Porter.* 1859.

Samuel Sharpe's Revision of the Authorized English Old Testament. 1865.

In endeavouring to present the whole subject continuously and intelligibly to the English reader, I may be thought perhaps to have quoted the Hebrew prophets *more fully* than was necessary ; and various passages adduced may seem to many persons to have no clear bearing on the Messianic question. But I have chosen to err here by excess rather than defect, because the reference which seems to one person doubtful *may* to another seem more clear, and I would not omit anything that can be fairly thought to belong to the subject. From the same cause there is, of course, a good deal of repetition in the passages, collected from so many prophets, referring to the same great national topic of the people's return to their land. I have thought it my duty to produce them all; but the reader can, if he chooses, pass lightly over some of them. My printer has, moreover, exhibited them, by my desire, not as mere quotations in small type, but as virtually forming the text of that part of the book in which they occur. Indeed, we have made them more emphatic than my own part of the book, by putting them in full-sized type and *indenting* the lines. In these parts, I have only to let the Prophets speak their own thoughts in clear English, and try to understand what they have said. This remark applies especially to the Isaiah of the Return (Chap. VIII. of Part I.), whose prophesying presents the National hope of the Jews in its most distinct and radiant form, as on the very eve of being realized, and thereby bring it to the crucial test of historical fulfilment or failure. To have given a mere abstract of this younger Isaiah, would have seemed like suppressing the main evidence of the case.

AUGUST 30, 1871.

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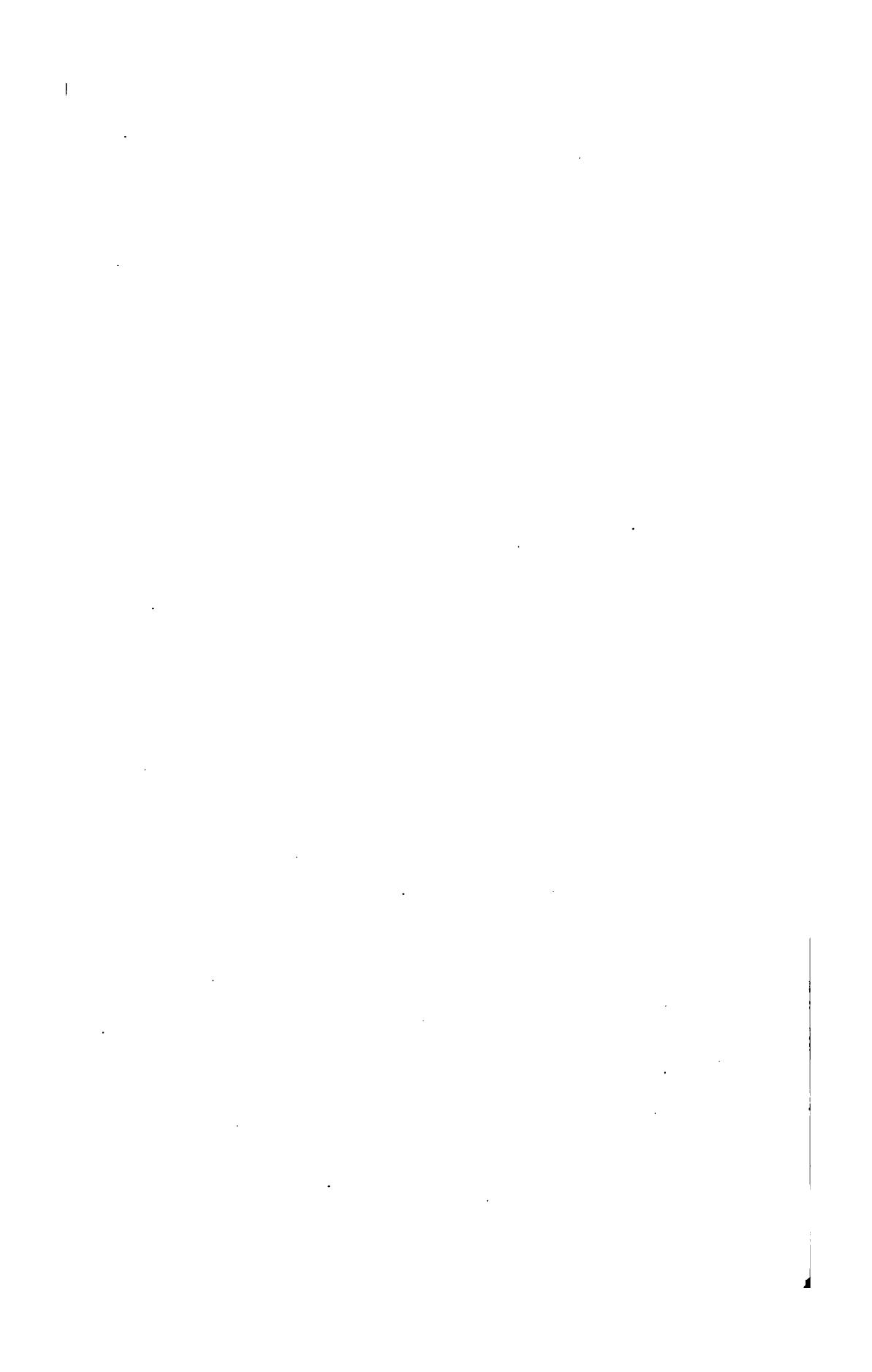
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PART I.

THE MESSIAH OF JEWISH HOPE.



THE MESSIAH OF JEWISH HOPE.

CHAPTER I.

THE SUBJECT STATED. JUDAISM PROSPECTIVE.

THERE is nothing more interesting in the Jewish religion,—perhaps nothing more truly characteristic of its spirit,—than its *prospectiveness*. “Onwards, onwards yet,” is its constant attitude; “Hope on, hope ever,” its virtual motto.

The sense of evil and imperfection, physical and moral, in themselves and in the world around, has caused men variously to imagine, with earnest desire or sad regret, a better and happier state of earthly things. This sentiment may take the form of regret for a better past believed to be irrevocably gone; or it may express itself in the hope of a future still to be realized. Thus the Greeks and Romans had their Golden Age or Race in the dim traditions of their mythology, an age fondly believed by them to have existed, but also believed to be hopelessly and for ever gone. The Hebrews, while they too had their belief in the Eden of man’s brief innocence, had also the strong and irrepressible expectation of a better, purer and happier age still to come, which should not be the transient but the enduring state

of man on earth. And if (as is not unlikely) the Greeks and the Romans derived the former idea from the Hebrews, it is all the more remarkable that they should not have adopted the latter also. Two or three passages in the Greek and Roman poets will indeed occur to the minds of classical scholars (and shall be presented in their proper connection), in which the idea seems to be caught for a moment, but only in order to vanish again from their national literature ; whereas the Hebrew literature is full of it to overflowing. This religion seems to breathe world-wide hopes of blessings to come, though centering, it may be, in a patriotism no wider in its general aspects than that of other nations. While the aim and desire of the Romans was universality of empire, but without any belief in its subserviency to human happiness at large, the Hebrews also learned to look for a world-wide ascendancy, but of another kind, and not through any belief or experience of their own prowess in war. They expected it to come from the direct intervention of the God whose sole deity and high perfections they alone acknowledged. And its sway they expected would be that of religious reverence and pure morals ; a spiritual empire, and yet outwardly manifest also,—a spiritual, but at the same time a temporal sway ;—of which perhaps the Papacy at its height might be considered as the nearest realization in point of its extensive influence, but incomparably more worldly in its character, and more tyrannical in its exercise of power, than ever Hebrews imagined.

Now this is a peculiarity of the Jewish thought and literature ; this belief in its own destination to bless and guide the world. We do not find it in Heathenism, which was always local or national, and content to be so. Explain this peculiarity or no, it is most interesting to notice. The Hebrews have always an ideal Future to live up to and to strive after. It gilds the troubles of the present and inspires

its energies. Does not this peculiarity in their case bespeak at least a conscious belief in the divinity and efficacy of their religion, which had given them the idea of a perfect God? Is not their faith in human nature a result of their faith in His providence? Is it not traceable directly to revealed instructions in some cases (be they few or many), in which the promise is recorded to have been divinely held forth,—and indirectly in many more, in which the national and human hopes build and expand themselves upon the high religious belief? And are not these developments indicative of the reality and excellence of the Jewish revelation?

I think they are. And if so, the mistakes, however many they may be, in the bright anticipations of the Hebrew prophets and poets (to which the sceptic, encouraged by the irrational interpretations of uncritical believers, points with scornful triumph), are nothing but what is to be expected on the true theory of divine revelation. They are the *human appropriations made of the divine promises*; the human interpretations of the revealed attributes of God; most interesting and most instructive for theologian, moralist and philanthropist, to study.

This prospective thought of the Hebrews is commonly known as their MESSIANIC IDEA. It shews itself at intervals throughout their literature from the earliest times, and is developed at large in the books of their Prophets in endless diversity and richness of style, under the manifest belief that the advent of the blessed days is near at hand.

From Judaism it was transferred (under certain very important modifications) to Christianity; and it may be regarded as a great connecting link between the two religions, and between their respective Scriptures. Judaism is acknowledged by Christians in general to have been the divinely arranged preparation for the Gospel, through its

strict Monotheism, its elevated worship and its pure morals. So St. Paul described it as "the guardian to bring us as pupils to the school of Christ." (Galat. iii. 24.)

But it is a great question, in the theology of free inquirers, to what extent those who lived under the former dispensation were *consciously looking* for any such manifestation of revealed religion as was *afterwards made, in point of fact*, through Jesus of Nazareth.

By many Christians, of the more conventional and uncritical order, the history and scriptures of the Jews are still regarded as at every step *typical*, if not directly *prophetic*, of Christ and Christianity. But, to more intelligent and critical readers, it appears plain that the Jewish prophecies are far indeed from containing a clear and accurate anticipation of the Gospel. Their most elevated descriptions plainly represent an expected outward Kingdom of God on earth, in which the Mosaic Law shall prevail over neighbouring nations, and the race of David be at the head of the most splendid monarchy in the world. To interpret these Jewish expectations as originally and designedly descriptive of the Kingdom of God as it was afterwards proclaimed by Jesus Christ, requires such straining of language from its natural and simple meaning, as is by no means respectful to the writers. It is therefore more common with interpreters considered orthodox to admit that most of those prophecies refer, *in their primary sense*, to more immediate events, chiefly of a secular kind, in the Jewish history; and to regard them as pointing onwards in a *secondary* (though infinitely more important) sense to the Christian dispensation and its spiritual leader. But this theory of a *double sense* of Scripture, which would condemn the claims of any secular book to respect (except a book of avowed riddles or conundrums), cannot be lightly admitted in the case of the Scriptures of revelation.

There is a third view of the matter, generally adopted by the Jews themselves and by a few thoughtful Christian expositors (even the heretical Dr. Priestley among them), according to which an outward Jewish kingdom on earth is still to be expected ; the dispersed nation are yet to be restored to the possession of the Holy Land under a race of kings of the true Davidic stock ; a purified but still ritual Judaism is to prevail over surrounding nations ; and the moral and religious welfare of mankind to be conspicuously promoted by this means. The natural meaning of language might justify this view to the reader of the Prophets, if their visions must be taken as *verbally inspired and literally true* ;—with this one important *exception*, however, that the *marks of time* by which they often limit their visions to things shortly to come to pass, *must be totally disregarded*. But why make this exception ? On so rigid a view of verbal inspiration, how is the interpreter intitled to make light of the very plainest assertions of all ? In point of time at least, the temporal Judaism has not been restored as foretold and as expected ; and, though the remnant of the dispersed nation still hopes against hope for a temporal Messiah to interfere on their behalf, the stern facts of history for many ages, and the present aspects of the political world, forbid the expectation to thoughtful minds in general ; as true criticism forbids that interpretation of the language used by the Prophets.

Perhaps a fourth and far simpler view may do more real justice, both literary and religious, to the facts of the case.

It will be the object of this volume, first of all, to bring into continuous view all that the Scriptures, both of the Old Testament and of the New, *actually say* on this subject. The allusions to the Messianic kingdom are so scattered, through the Prophets especially, where they most abound,—and the books of the Prophets have been put

together so utterly without regard to their real order of composition (which is now pretty fully ascertained by careful criticism),—that it is difficult for the ordinary reader of the Bible to know distinctly what the Bible ideas on this subject really are. We must therefore first ascertain what the Jewish prophets *really did anticipate*, and what the Jewish people *really did believe*. And as these expectations were very strongly and definitely fixed upon one most marked period of their history, namely, their seventy years' captivity in Babylon and their return from that captivity to their own land, we must read the history of their return in connection with the songs of the prophets who had announced it, and of those who heralded and guided the actual event. And we must ask ourselves candidly, whether the prophetic hope was adequately fulfilled in that return. We must listen to the disappointed regrets of the returned exiles themselves, and learn, from their later Scriptures of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha, in what attitude of new expectation they still looked further onward for the coming of the long-delayed kingdom. Certainly the history of the nation under its Syrian and Egyptian rulers does not fulfil the Messianic idea; nor even under its Maccabean princes, though that idea doubtless inspired their heroic deeds.

We must then proceed to inquire, from the Scriptures of the New Testament (after noting the heathen testimonies to the growth of this hope through the East), in what sense Jesus of Nazareth, and his apostles with him and after him, considered these Jewish expectations as receiving fulfilment under their hands. And we need not be surprised, as students of human nature, if we find that our Lord's Jewish apostles resisted his more spiritual ideas, and after his death still persisted in the hope of his coming again in glory and setting up Messiah's visible kingdom on

the earth. If, taking language always to mean what it most naturally does, we find, with the light of history reflected back upon the prophecies and desires of religious Jews and early Christians, a large mixture of beliefs and expectations which, however natural at the time, have been doomed by Providence to continual disappointment since, we must accept a different, less ready and formal, less conventional, less dogmatic (perhaps less orthodox), but more natural, more human and interesting, view of those Scriptures, instead of that easy, but passive and irrational one, which defies, instead of explaining, these palpable difficulties.

And then we may further trace the continued prevalence of these fascinating expectations in various modified forms, such as the expected End of the World, the Millennium, the Fifth Monarchy of our own Republican times, the New Jerusalem of Swedenborg, down through the long history of the Christian Church, even to the Scripture-torturing theories of the Mormons and Latter-day Saints of the present time.

The spirit of a more enlightened theology, now widely spread among educated persons, encourages this attempt; and not less perhaps does the growth of indifference to Biblical inquiries, among many who consider themselves enlightened, make it desirable. The former class are no longer shocked at the idea of reading the Scriptures with the same intelligence with which they read other books of importance, and distinguishing them, book by book, according to the nature and contents of each. Even Church dignitaries can now be heard saying, "The Books of Scripture only suffer from being subjected to requirements which we have ceased to apply to the books of common literature." Nor are we any longer surprised to find that, in these books of inestimable but various religious value,—these human

records of Divine Revelation,—the thoughts of man are continually intermingled with those of God, and the great principles of revealed religion develope themselves through the conceptions and feelings of human beings. So the Hebrew psalmist is not now expected to be infallible in mind, or exempt from human passions and infirmities of feeling, when he sings the praises of the revealed spiritual God, and devotes himself to His worship and service. So the writer or collector of Jewish proverbs is understood to present a store of human maxims gilded by a purer theology and higher ethics, yet not all divine and immaculate. And when the Prophets,—not predicters merely nor chiefly, but teachers, bards and exhorters rather, statesmen and politicians often,—express the characteristic Jewish expectation of a Messianic age and its glorious King, we must (if we would not ignore the salient facts of the case and the plainest characteristics of the writings) expect to read in their writings the national emotions, beliefs and hopes of the Jewish people as guided by its high religious idea, but not free from the natural exaggerations or delusions of a patriotism no larger, in its general aspects, than that of other nations.

This prospective attitude of the Jewish mind, I repeat, is, under this point of view, a most interesting characteristic, plainly connected with the high theology and morals of the nation, and expressing their practical belief in their destination, under the consenting providence of God, to promote the amelioration of mankind. At the same time, it may perhaps be partly traceable to two other admitted specialties of the Jewish theology; one of them negative, the other affirmative. It is remarkable that the Mosaic revelation gives no express sanction to the hope of a *Future Life*. Bishop Warburton long ago pointed out this fact in his learned book, the *Divine Legation of Moses*,

ingeniously arguing from it in favour of the truth of the Jewish Lawgiver's claims. Plainly, the Jews seem to have had no other belief in a life after death, than such as was suggested to them and to others by the natural love of life, —unless we think their purer theology might specially aid the belief. There are but few passages (seven or eight perhaps) in the whole Old Testament which seem fairly to imply it; and there are at least as many others which seem as darkly to doubt it. But the Jews were taught most positively to believe in the superintending *Providence* of God; and in the absence of any clearly defined belief in a future state, their firm belief in Providence as exercised by a God of infinite perfections may have led them to expect and believe in an amount of outward retributive justice, individual and national, beyond what is the actual order of human affairs. In particular they learnt to expect that God would outwardly bless them as a nation, if as a nation they obeyed the Mosaic law, and would punish them if they disobeyed it. Combining these two facts, the want of a clear expectation of a future life, and the strong conviction of a retributory providence in national weal and woe, they trusted that when the nation had sinned and been doomed to exile from their land, and in their exile had repented of their idolatries and returned to the service of the true God, the better age of prophetic aspiration would open upon them at last.

It is also to be observed that, in certain phases of the Messianic idea (especially between the return from Babylon and the coming of Jesus of Nazareth), the expectation of a future state seems to be blended, or even confused, with the Messianic hope for this world. Nor is such confusion or admixture to be wondered at in the circumstances.

Altogether, the Messianic idea, with all its fascinating mistakes, its hopes so enthusiastic, its disappointments so

sad, and its elastic perseverance, presents the Jewish nation and literature to our profound respect and Christian sympathy.

The more particular expression of this hope, in the Jewish Scriptures, we have now to investigate.

NOTE ON CHAPTER I.

"Among the many national characteristics which elevated the Jews among the other nations of antiquity, none is more striking than their power of living in and for the future. Nothing in the rich heritage of religious life and aspirations has been more fruitful in important consequences than this. The character of the Israelites, full of religious confidence and perseverance, even to obstinacy, was indeed a favourable soil for the developement of such a seed ; but its origin must be sought in *the revelation of the unity of God and of the eternal justice by which the world is ruled*. In any attempt to trace a part of God's revelation of Himself in the government of the world and in the heart of man, it is hardly possible to lay too much stress on the selection of the Jews for the reception of this fundamental religious truth, and their capacity of framing upon it their whole national and domestic life.

"Such a revelation, working on a religious assurance which loved to regard the Israelites as a chosen and favoured people, could not but produce great ideas alike in their prosperity and their adversity. In the hour of their prosperity, the vulgar looked for a wider empire and a still higher state of material welfare ; the pious few longed for a time when righteousness should go hand in hand with wealth, and the nation be under the direct inspiration of the Almighty. In dark times, when the chosen people bowed beneath the rod of the idolater or the infidel, then their hope burned brightest of all. Other nations could solve the problem of suffering righteousness and triumphant sin, either by putting evil on a level with good, and assigning to each passion its appropriate deity, or, by abandoning the world to the

reign of chance, could acquiesce in the apparently capricious bestowal of happiness and suffering through the denial of all moral order and government in the world. The Jews, on the contrary, interpreted the past and looked forward to the future, by the light of a revelation which raised them above the domain of accident and the limits of human life. In their ears had rung the words, 'I am the God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt. Thou shalt have no other gods than me.' 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is One God;' and again, 'Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the humble. There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.' Such revelations rendered fatalistic despair and fatalistic security equally impossible, and made the divine government visible beneath the confusions of the world.

"To them these anomalies were for a time. God would vindicate Himself. Impious men and impious nations stood upon slippery ground: the righteous alone was firmly planted, and his seed should endure for ever. God would avenge His saints and execute 'righteous judgment on the earth.' Thus, in moments of intense national suffering, prophets raised the hope of their countrymen by depicting the house of David triumphant once again and the nations smitten down in a day of judgment and retribution, or consoled their sorrow by describing the *Anointed of God* uniting hostile tribes under a reign of peace and love, and leading all people to one fold under one Shepherd.

* * * * *

"As is necessarily the case with every religious belief which relates to the future, the idea of God's Anointed or the coming 'Messiah' was different to different classes and in different times. To the vulgar it presented itself in the material aspect of a mighty conqueror establishing an earthly kingdom: the higher minds longed for a visible representative of the purposes of Jehovah and a kingdom wherein dwelleth righteousness." (*The Psalms chronologically arranged by Four Friends*, p. 117. Macmillan, 1867.)

CHAPTER II.

MESSIANIC HINTS CONTAINED IN THE PENTATEUCH.

THE Messianic hints contained in the Pentateuch present themselves to notice first in order. If the book of Genesis is not the oldest book in the Bible, it at least refers to the earliest times, and embodies the earliest histories and yet earlier traditions of the nation. If it was not written by Moses, it hands down the beliefs which were ascribed to him and the men of his time by Jews of later times. The critical doubts which beset the composition of the Pentateuch do not therefore materially affect our present search for such hints as may peep out in those books, of that Messianic idea which was afterwards more fully developed and earnestly believed.

These hints are not indeed many. One at the beginning of Genesis, and another in Deuteronomy, are perhaps all that can be confidently cited; and these must not be made to mean more than they naturally do.

In the picture of the Garden of Eden (Gen. ii. iii.), which is evidently an attempted theory of the origin of human toil and suffering, and which represents them as having ensued upon one act of disobedience on the part of our first parents, the observable thing, *as regards our present subject*, is, that the doom pronounced upon the race is *not* represented as *final and absolute beyond mitigation*. A door of hope is opened in the very act of condemnation. The seed of the woman shall sustain a brave struggle with

the principle of evil (represented in the serpent), and gain a prevailing ascendancy over it. It can but hurt his foot; but man shall crush its head. "Jehovah said unto the serpent: I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Whether this seed of the woman denotes the human race in general (as seems the most natural meaning), or an individual descendant (as more generally imagined), may indeed be left doubtful, and is not very material to our large view of the matter. The point of importance is, that the doom of mankind is *not irrevocably sealed*. They shall still struggle nobly, and Evil shall crouch at their feet. Here is the Divine hope for ages to come. The Jews caught it and lived by it. (See Note A at the end of this Chapter.)

Contrast with this theory the more laboured (and perhaps more elegant) traditions of the Greeks, as given in Hesiod and repeated with variations by Aratus and by the Latin poet Ovid, detailing the gradual but rapid deterioration of mankind from the *Golden Age or Race*, the period of perfect rectitude but total inactivity (if that be conceivable), when Spring was constant the year round, and Nature spontaneously supplied all men's wants;—through the *Silver Age*, when (Jupiter having dethroned his father Saturn) the beautiful rotation of seasons was instituted to mark the divine or human deterioration (!), and human labour began to be required for human sustenance;—then through the *Brazen Age*, when wars began;—down to the abiding and hopeless *Age of Iron*, when ideas of property arose, and commerce (the horror of the old classical poets) prevailed, and (worst of all) mineral wealth was dug out of the earth! Meanwhile all the gods, who had dwelt at first familiarly with man, successively leave this accursed earth;—Reverence and Retribution depart;—Astræa alone

(Justice, or, as I am disposed to think, Pity) lingering last of all ; but now she too goes away, leaving men to their hapless, hopeless fate, in wickedness and wretchedness, and is herself transferred to the sky as the bright constellation *Virgo*. (See Note B at the end of this Chapter.)

The promises repeatedly made to Abraham,* that his descendants should become a great nation and possess the gate of their enemies ; that they should be as the stars of heaven or the sand of the sea-shore for number, and that in him (or his seed) all the nations of the earth should be blessed, point to expectations which, in the highest sense, have been fully realized in history, inasmuch as the Jewish people have become the blessing of the world, however ungratefully the world called Christian has looked upon them and their religion. These promises to their great ancestor express the nation's hope in its most benevolent aspect. And let the religious and moral obligations conferred by Judaism be freely and thankfully acknowledged. Never let the religion nor the people be spoken of but with respect and veneration.

The words ascribed to Jacob among his dying blessings on his sons, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come" (Gen. xlix. 10), are quite too obscure to build argument upon. The assertion directly made is, the future supremacy of Judah among the other tribes. The word *Shiloh*, everywhere else in the Old Testament and in the New, means the place where the tabernacle was set up on their entrance into Canaan, and where it remained usually till the time of David, who removed it to Jerusalem. It is never, in any other passage but this one, supposed to be a name for the Messiah. Many critics translate this verse, "*till he come to Shiloh.*" (See Note A at end of Chapter.)

* Gen. xii. 2, xv. 5, xviii. 18, xxii. 17, xxvi. 4.

A more important intimation of the prospective character of the Jewish religion is the recorded promise of Moses (in Deut. xviii. 15—22), that a prophet, or a series of prophets, shall arise after him. It occurs after denouncing the practices of witchcraft, divination, &c.:

Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of Jehovah thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of Jehovah my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And Jehovah said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which Jehovah hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of Jehovah, if the thing follow not, neither come to pass, that is the thing which Jehovah hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him.

It is indeed common to take this passage as pointing to Jesus Christ individually and alone. But, if read intire and in its connection, it evidently promises a succession of prophets or teachers like Moses, men holding converse

with God and instructing and warning their fellow-men, such as fill the pages of the Bible with their deeds and words, the whole series culminating in Jesus and his apostles. The passage also defines the Jewish idea of a Jewish prophet. And a very notable thing in the description is the test proposed for distinguishing a true prophet from a false one, namely, to observe whether what he has spoken *follows or comes to pass, or not.* This test could only be applied to predictions of things *near at hand*; and it plainly shews that the words of the Jewish prophets are, generally at least, to be interpreted as pointing to things not very remote. At any rate, the nearest fulfilment should be regarded as most naturally intended by the prophet. And it may often appear that the Messianic expectation has seemed to the prophet's mind nearer and brighter (in a secular point of view) than the event has proved. (See Note A at the end of this Chapter.)

It is of these men and of their onward expectant attitude that St. Peter said in retrospect:

The prophets have inquired and searched diligently (concerning the Gospel salvation), who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what or what manner of time the spirit of the Messiah which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of the Messiah and the glory that should follow; unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us (of distant times) did they minister. (1 Pet. i. 10—12.)

And of the same and other worthies of the Hebrew history, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says (xi. 39, 40):

These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the (fulfilment of the) promise;

God having provided some better thing for us, that they should not, without us, be made perfect.

NOTE A ON CHAPTER II.

"Those who read in Genesis of the woman's seed bruising the serpent's head, understand most naturally Mankind by the seed, and evil or the tempting adversary by the serpent. So far as this is fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, it is because he most eminently represents Mankind triumphing over evil. A similar construction may explain the 8th Psalm, in which God puts creation under the feet of Man, especially of the best of men, though the intensity with which in the Epistle to the Hebrews this application is limited to Jesus, requires indulgence for the Hermeneutics of an age in which to edify by the use of Scripture was considered identical with interpreting it. The Shiloh of Genesis *xlix.*, meaning the local sanctuary of Ephraim, has been surrendered in its personal reference by candid interpreters. The Prophet, promised in Deuteronomy *xviii. 18*, is most naturally understood of the long series of Prophets, Samuel, Elijah, Jeremiah, who recalled Israel to the living God—so far as Jesus is the greatest of Prophets, such a text may be applied to him." (*The Hebrew Prophets*, translated by Rowland Williams, D.D., p. 152.)

NOTE B ON CHAPTER II.

HESIOD, contemporary with Homer or not much later, is the earliest authority on this subject. He lived in the 8th or 9th century B.C. His *myth* of the early ages of man is as follows, translated as literally as is practicable :

First, the immortals who possess the Olympian dwellings formed a Golden race of articulate-speaking men. These were when Saturn (Kronos) was king of heaven. They lived like Gods, with minds free from care, exempt from labour and affliction. Nor did wretched age befall them ; but, unfailing in hand

or foot, they enjoyed their festivities free from all evils. They died as if overcome by sleep. All blessings were theirs. The corn-giving earth spontaneously produced unstinted abundance, and they possessed their lands in tranquil security amid many blessings, rich in flocks, beloved by the blessed Gods. But since the earth has hidden this race from view, they are, as mighty Jove has decreed, good terrestrial spirits (*dæmons*), guardians of mortal men. They mark both just and wicked deeds, moving everywhere over the earth, shrouded in air, and bestowing prosperity. Such is the regal honour they have gained.

Then the inhabitants of Olympus formed a second race, the Silver, far inferior to the former, resembling the Golden neither in form nor in mind. But the boy grew up through an infancy of a hundred years under his mother's care at home ; and as they severally grew to youth, they lived a very short time, suffering the evils of rashness, for they could not abstain from arrogant insolence towards each other, nor would they serve the Immortals, nor sacrifice on the holy altars of the Blessed, as is right for men throughout their settlements. Then Jupiter Kronides in anger put them out of sight, because they did not give honour to the blessed Gods who inhabit Olympus. But since the earth hid this race also, they are called Blessed Mortals underground, second in rank, yet honour attends them likewise.

But father Jupiter made still a third race of articulate-speaking men, the Brazen, not at all like the Silver ; he made them of ash-trees, a dreadful and violent race, whose delight was in the mournful and injurious deeds of war. They did not eat corn, but had souls hard as adamant and insatiable. Their strength was great ; their hands were irresistible, attached to their shoulders by robust limbs. They had brazen weapons, brazen houses, with brass they worked ; for black iron was not yet. And they, when subdued by each other's hands, went to the mouldy house of cold Aides (Hades), without renown. For black death took them, dreadful as they were, and they left the bright light of the sun.

But when this race also was hidden underground, Jupiter Kronides made another still, a fourth, upon the all-sustaining earth, a better and juster race, the divine race of heroic men who are called demigods over the wide earth by the race preceding our own. And these were destroyed by sad war and dreadful battle ; some at the seven-gated Thebes in the land of Cadmus, fighting about the sheep of Oedipus ; and some also who had been led in ships over the great gulf of the sea to Troy on behalf of Helen with the beauteous hair. But there death finally enveloped some of them. For some the father Jupiter Kronides having provided food and settlement apart from men, established them at the extremity of the earth, far away from the immortals, Saturn (Kronos) reigning over them. And there they dwell with untroubled mind in the Islands of the Blest, by the deep ocean ;—fortunate heroes, to whom the bounteous soil thrice a year brings teeming fruit as sweet as honey.

Oh that I had not been doomed to have part with the fifth race of men ; but might have died before, or not been born till after it ! For now indeed is the Iron age. Never, by day or night, shall they cease to be worn with labour and affliction, and the Gods will send them difficult cares. Yet still shall some blessings be mixed even with these evils. But Jupiter will destroy this race also of articulate-voiced men, when at their birth they shall be grey-templed. Neither shall father be kind to his children, nor the children (to each other) ; nor shall guest be friendly to host, nor companion to companion, nor relative (to relative), as formerly. And they will dishonour their parents as soon as they grow old. Harshly they will find fault with them in cruel words, not regarding the vengeance of the Gods ; nor will repay nurture to their parents in their age, using the right of the strongest ; and one will destroy another's city. Nor will any favour be shewn to the man who respects his oath, the just man or the good man ; but they will rather honour him who is active in evil and injury. Justice and Reverence will cease to be in use ; and the bad man will injure a better man, pursuing him with tortuous words, and will add an oath. Slanderous

Envy, exulting in mischief and sour-faced, shall track all these miserable men. And then shall Reverence and Retribution (*Aἰδώς καὶ Νέμεσις*) desert mankind and leave the broad earth, wrapping their fair skin in their white mantles, and go to the race of the immortals. But the mournful griefs shall be left behind for mortal men. There will be no help against evil. (Hesiod, *Works and Days*, B. i. 109—201.)

ARATUS, a Greek poet, born at Soli in Cilicia in the third century B.C., imitated, yet somewhat modified, Hesiod. According to him, there were only three races of men; the Golden, the Silver and the Brazen. Justice (*Δίκη*) dwelt familiarly among the first, teaching them what was right and good. In the silver age, Justice departed to the mountains, from which she occasionally came down to remonstrate with mankind on their evil deeds. When the third race came, forging arms and eating the flesh of the ox, she fled to the stars, and became the constellation Virgo or Astræa.

OVID's four ages are well known to every Latin scholar. (*Metam.* Lib. i. 89—150.)

The Golden age came first, which, spontaneously and without controlling authority or law, observed fidelity and rectitude. Punishment and fear were unknown; nor were words of threatening read inscribed in brass; nor did the suppliant crowd tremble before the presence of their judge; but all were safe without protector. Not yet had the pine-tree been cut on its native mountains and launched in the liquid waters, to visit the foreign world; nor had men become acquainted with any shores but their own. Not yet were towns encompassed with deep ditches; nor was there the straight brazen trumpet or the bent cornet; nor helmet, nor sword. Without the help of soldiers, the nations spent their leisure in security. The earth itself, free to all, untouched by rake, unwounded by plough, produced all things spontaneously; and men were content with food that grew of itself, and so gathered arbute berries and mountain strawberries, and cornels and blackberries sticking on the rough

brambles, and acorns which had fallen from the wide-spreading tree of Jupiter. Spring was perpetual, and the gentle zephyrs with their soft gales cherished the flowers which grew unsown. By and by the ground, still uncultivated, brought forth fruits, and the field without culture was white with heavy ears of corn. In these days some rivers ran milk, and others ran nectar ; and yellow honey distilled from the green ilex.

When the world came under Jove's sway (Saturn having been sent into Tartarus), the Silver race succeeded ;—worse than gold, more valuable than yellow brass. Jupiter shortened the period of the former spring, and distributed the year over winter, summer, and varying autumns and a short spring, in four spaces. Then first the burning air glowed with dry heat, and icicles hung fastened by the wind. Caves served as houses ; also thick shrubs and twigs tied with bark. Then first the seeds of corn were sown in the long furrows, and bullocks groaned under pressure of the yoke.

After these came the third, the Brazen race ; more savage in disposition and more ready for dreadful arms,—yet not desperately wicked.

The last race was of hard Iron. Immediately all wickedness broke in upon this age of inferior metal. Modesty and Truth and Faith fled away, and into their place succeeded fraud, deceit and treachery of every kind, and violence and the accursed love of accumulation. The sailor spread his sails to the winds, not yet thoroughly known to him ; and trees which had long stood on the high mountains, plunged as ships into the untried waters. And the land, hitherto common as the sun's light and the air, was marked out by the careful surveyor with a long track. Nor was the rich soil merely required to produce corn and all due sustenance ; but men penetrated into the bowels of the earth, and wealth, which had been concealed in it and put near to the Stygian shades, is now dug out,—wealth, the incentive of all kinds of evil. And now destructive iron, and gold more destructive than iron, had been brought out ; and War comes forth, using both of them as his weapons, and striking his

rattling arms with bloody hand. Men live by plunder. Guest is not safe from host, nor host from guest ; kindness is scarce even between brothers. The husband threatens his wife with destruction, and she her husband ; dread step-mothers mix the lurid aconite ; the son prematurely inquires his father's age. Piety lies prostrate ; and the Virgin Astraea, last of the celestials to depart, has left the earth wet with slaughter.

CHAPTER III.

THE NAME MESSIAH ; ITS MEANING AND VARIOUS APPLICATIONS.

THE term *Messiah*, which came to express the highest national and religious hopes of the Jews, literally means *Anointed*. It is the passive participle of the Hebrew verb *to anoint*, used with tacit reference to the very ancient practice of anointing with fine oil or ointment the head of a king or a priest on his accession to his office. *Christos*, or *Christ*, is the Greek translation of it; so that to call ourselves Christians is to profess that we have found a Messiah, an anointed King or Priest, or both,—whether literally or figuratively meant.

The earliest recorded anointing in the Scriptures is not, however, that of a person, but of an inanimate object. It is in Gen. xxviii. 18, where Jacob, after his vision of the angels of God ascending and descending on the ladder or stairs that reached to heaven, “rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillow, and set it up for a pillar, and *oured oil upon the top of it*, and called the name of that place Beth-El (house of God).” Afterwards (xxxii. 13) this act is described by the verbal root of *Messiah*: “I am the God of Beth-El, where thou *anointedst the pillar*.”

The order to anoint the Jewish priests to their office is given in Exodus xxxviii. 41: “And thou shalt anoint them (Aaron and his sons with him) and consecrate them and sanctify them, that they may minister unto me in the priests’

office." (See also Ex. xxx. 30, xl. 15, &c.) In xxix. 7, the anointing oil is directed to be "poured upon the head." Allusions to this ceremony are frequent; none more poetical than the figurative application made of it in Psalm cxxxiii., referring probably to the return from Babylon:

Behold how good and how pleasant it is, for brethren
to dwell together in unity!
It is like the precious oil upon the head, that ran down
upon the beard, even Aaron's beard,
That went down to the collar of his garments;
As the dew of Hermon and as the dew that descends
on the mountains of Zion;
For there the Eternal commandeth His blessing, even
life for evermore.

In this connection may be mentioned the orders to anoint the altar, the tabernacle, the laver and its foot. (Ex. xxix. 36, xxx. 26, xl. 9—11.)

The first mention of *royal* anointing is in Jotham's parable (Judges ix. 8), where it is alluded to as a thing of course and well understood in the common practice of mankind: "The trees went forth on a time to *anoint a king* over them," &c. In 1 Sam. ix. 16, the prophet Samuel is commissioned to anoint a man out of the land of Benjamin "to be ruler over my people Israel;" and in the next chapter he took a vial of oil and poured it upon Saul's head, and kissed him and said: "Is it not because Jehovah hath *anointed thee ruler* over his inheritance?" This is the earliest instance of regal anointing; and henceforth both the regal and the priestly are established usages. On this anointing of Saul, Dean Stanley observes:

"He was the first of the long succession of Jewish kings. He was the first recorded instance of inauguration by that singular ceremonial which, in imitation of the Hebrew rite, has descended

to the coronation of our own sovereigns. The sacred oil was used for his ordination, as for a Priest. He was the ‘Lord’s Anointed’ in a peculiar sense, that invested his person with a special sanctity. And from him the name of ‘the Anointed One’ was handed on till it received in the latest days of the Jewish Church its very highest application—in Hebrew or Aramaic, *the Messiah*; in Greek, *the Christ*.” (*Lectures on the Jewish Church*, P. ii. p. 18.)

The Jewish king is henceforth “the Lord’s Anointed.” No idiom is more common, especially in the histories of Saul and David.* The second Psalm, written in reference to one of the Jewish kings, probably David or Solomon (though some think Jehoshaphat), calls that king the *Messiah* or *Anointed* (v. 2) :

The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers
take counsel together, against the Eternal and against
His Anointed (saying) :

Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their
cords from us.

The Psalm goes on to describe the Eternal as saying of this king :

Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion :

And further, as adopting him for a Son :

I will declare the decree of the Eternal : He hath said
unto me: Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten
thee ;

Ask of me, and I will give thee nations for thine in-
heritance,

And the uttermost parts of the land for thy possession.

* See 1 Sam. xii. 3, 5, xvi. 6, xxiv. 6, 10, xxvi. 9, 16; 2 Sam. i. 14, 21, ii. 7, iii. 39, xix. 21, xxii. 51, xxiii. 1, &c.; also Ps. xviii. 50, xxviii. 8, lxxxix. 20, 38, cxxxii. 17.

In conclusion, the opposing princes are admonished to "serve Jehovah with fear," and (if the common version be correct) to reverence this adopted Son and Messiah of God :

Kiss the Son,* lest he be angry and ye perish from the way.

The forty-fifth Psalm was plainly written on occasion of a royal Jewish wedding, probably that of Solomon to the daughter of the king of Egypt. It is inappropriate to that of David with Bathsheba, who was not a "king's daughter." Here occurs (at ver. 7) the Messianic image:

(In the common version):

Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies,
Whereby the people fall under thee.
Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;
The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.
Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness;
Therefore God, thy God, *hath anointed* thee
With the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

In the Septuagint and other translations we have :

God is thy throne for ever and ever.

(Or),

God be thy throne for ever and ever!

Another Psalm still better deserves quotation as representing the higher Messianic Jewish thought as it prevailed in the best days of the monarchy. It is the seventy-second, intitled (and no doubt correctly), *A Psalm for Solomon*, written apparently on Solomon's accession, when he was

* The term rendered *Son* is not, however, pure Hebrew, such as belongs to the time of the monarchy. Geddes and others translate : "Adore sincerely, lest," &c. The general scope of the passage is the same either way.

proclaimed king by his father's commands in David's declining life. (1 Kings i. 34, &c.) It was more probably written by Nathan, or some other poet or prophet, than by the old king himself. It implores for the young king a just, beneficent and prosperous reign :

Give the king thy judgments, O God ; and thy righteousness unto the king's son,
That he may judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with equity.
The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills on account of righteousness.
He shall right the poor of the people ; he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.
They shall revere thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.
He shall be as rain that cometh down upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth.
In his days justice shall flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.
He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the land.
They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, and his enemies shall lick the dust.
The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents ; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.
Yea, all kings shall bow down to him, all nations shall serve him.
For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth ; the afflicted also and him that hath no helper.
He shall spare the poor and needy, and save the lives of the destitute.
He shall redeem their life from deceit and violence ; and precious shall be their blood in his sight.

He shall preserve them and share with them the gold
of Sheba ;
And prayers shall be made for him continually, and
daily shall he be praised.
There shall be abundance of corn on the ground ;
On the top of the mountains its fruits shall wave like
Lebanon ;
And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the
earth.
His name shall endure for ever ;
His name shall last as long as the sun ;
And men shall bless each other by him ;
All nations shall call him blessed.
Blessed be Jehovah God, the God of Israel, who only
doeth wondrous things !
And blessed be his glorious name for ever !
And let the whole earth be filled with his glory !
Amen and Amen.

This noble Psalm is the most *Messianic* (so to speak) in the collection, and is applied by Bible readers in general, without hesitation or conscious difficulty, to the Messiah of Nazareth, as beautifully describing the spirit of his reign. But they omit to notice its true historic marks, which assign it distinctly to the accession of Solomon. Regarded historically, the Psalm is thoroughly illustrative of the Messianic thought of its own period. It is plain that the idea of an anointed and interminable race of kings is fast laying hold of the Jewish mind. And what more natural, in the consciousness of their pure religious belief, and under the outward prosperity of the Davidic and Solomonian kingdom ?

Dean Stanley says in this connection :

“ It was as Founder of the Israelitish Empire, even more than as Founder of the royal dynasty or of the order of Psalmists, that David seemed in the eyes of his contemporaries to be

'the Light and Splendour of Israel.' (2 Sam. xxi. 17, &c.) It was as Conqueror, even more than as Ruler, that he especially appears as the *Messiah*, the Anointed one. It is in his order of battle, even more than in his religious processions, that the Ruler of Israel—whether David or David's descendant—appears as the Priestly King. When he is addressed as a Priest, though not of Levitical descent,—a Priest bursting through all the common regulations of the Priesthood—an immortal Priest like the ancient Melchizedek—it is as the mighty Leader who is to trample, like Joshua, on the necks of his enemies, who is to be surrounded by his armies, numerous and fresh and brilliant as the drops of the morning dew, striking through kings in the day of his wrath, filling his pathway with the corpses of the dead, wounding the heads of many countries, refreshed as he passes by the watercourse which divides country from country, and going on with his head aloft, conquering and to conquer. (Ps. cx.) This was the foundation of that resplendent image of the Messiah, which it required the greatest of all changes to move from the mind of the Jewish nation, in order to raise up instead of it the still more exalted idea which was to take its place—an Anointed Sovereign conquering by other arts than those of war, and in other dominions than those of earthly empire." (*Lectures*, P. ii. p. 97.)

Some may consider this picture as overdrawn, as giving a more exclusively secular and military idea of the Jewish Messiah-king than is just. But in the days of David and Solomon, no doubt, the idea was largely national and regal. The more spiritual element was yet to come. And in proportion as this description of Jewish thought in the days of David and Solomon is correct (which, beyond doubt, it is in the main), it explains the pertinacity of the Jewish ideas respecting a temporal Messiah. Again, the same able writer says, with truth of description confirmed by history :

"The glory of David carried with it a pledge of the continu-

ance of his dynasty to the remotest ages of which Jewish imagination could conceive. This fixed belief in the eternity of the House of David, of which the Psalms are the earliest and most constant expression, has had its faint counterpart in those yearnings which in other countries have suggested the return of the beloved sovereign himself,—Arthur of Britain, Henry of Portugal, Frederick Barbarossa of Germany. But the Jewish belief had a far deeper basis. When the decline of David's royal race appeared to extinguish the hopes that were bound up with it, instead of vanishing away like those popular fancies just mentioned, the expectation of the Jewish Church sprang up in a new form, and with increased vitality. It fastened, not as before, on the ruined and exiled dynasty, nor yet, as occasionally, on the actual person of David, but on the coming of One who should be a Son of David, and restore the shattered throne, and build up again the original tent or hut which David had pitched on his first entrance into Jerusalem. This expectation of 'a Son of David,' who should revive the fallen splendour of his father's house, blended with the general hope of restoration peculiar to the Jewish race, reached the highest pitch a thousand years after David's death. Suddenly there came One, to whom, though He did not desire the name for Himself, it was freely given by others. He is repeatedly called the Son of David." (*Lectures*, P. ii. p. 159.)

We have to trace the growth of this expectation step by step, its disappointment, its fluctuations, and chastened revival through those thousand years, as expressed by the Jewish prophets and historians themselves.

Meanwhile there is another application of the term Messiah, less frequent thus far than those of a personal kind, but of no little importance in the interpretation of the prophetic writings. It is sometimes, perhaps often, used to denote the whole Jewish people; *the chosen, the adopted, the anointed nation*: In Psalm cv. (which is copied and enlarged, probably by a later poet, from a Psalm quoted in

1 Chron. xvi. 7—22, as having been written by David) the history of the Jewish people is recited with perpetual reference to the manifest providence of God over them; and in reciting their wanderings in the desert, the Psalmist says:

When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people,
He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproved kings for their sake;
Saying: Touch not *mine Anointed*, and do my *Prophets* no harm. (Ps. cv. 13—15; 1 Chron. xvi. 20—22.)

Here the Jewish people in general are the LORD's *Messiahs*, and his prophets. It is but a variation upon the figures used in the song of Miriam after the passing of the Red Sea :

Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people *which thou hast redeemed* ;
Thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.
Fear and dread shall fall upon (the inhabitants of Canaan)
Till *thy people* pass over, O Lord; till the people pass over, *whom thou hast purchased*. (Exod. xv. 13, 16.)

The same collective use of the term *Messiah* for the Jewish people is found in 1 Sam. ii. 10, in Hannah's prayer or hymn :

He shall give strength to his king, and exalt the horn of his *Anointed* ;

unless, indeed, the introduction of the word *king* (before the time of the monarchy) seems an anachronism sufficient to discredit the reading or the interpretation. But it is observable that the Septuagint has "our kings" (plural), and the term may well be taken in the sense of *rulers*.

Let this phraseology then be carefully noted. The term Messiah was not always a *personal* term. It sometimes stands for the Jewish nation, the holy, the anointed Israel. In some parts of the prophetic books this is perfectly clear; in others it may be difficult to decide whether it denotes the anointed people generally, or their anointed ruler; where, however, the sense would be essentially the same under either interpretation.

In one very remarkable passage the title is given to Cyrus, the Persian king, whose edict permitted the return of the Jews from their long exile in Babylon:

Thus saith Jehovah to his *Anointed*, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations under him. (Isaiah xlvi. 1. See also xliv. 28; Ezra i. 1, &c.)

The chapters next following will shew, on the evidence of the Hebrew historians and prophets quoted much at large, how the idea of the Messianic kingdom and its King grew and was modified;—how it fixed itself earnestly upon one glowing picture after another, and, disappointed repeatedly, still regained its ascendancy;—most especially how, in the greatest national humiliation and distress, it pointed the hopes of the nation onward to distant times, and became a less worldly and more spiritual expectation, less merely national and more religiously cosmopolitan, through the discipline of repeated disappointment.

The natural division of this part of the subject (in point of extent of material, the largest portion by far) is three-fold, as traced, first, in the prophets who speak of the Assyrian Captivity; next, in those preceding the Babylonian Captivity; and then in those of the Return under the decree of Cyrus. This will bring us to the end of the Old Testament times, leaving the national hope sadly depressed, but still persistent. Through centuries more, under the

Persian, the Syrian and the Egyptian rule, the hope will be seen bravely struggling against disappointment, but growing in spirituality and vaguely pervading the greater Heathen world also ; till, on the coming of Jesus of Nazareth, it is put to the severest test, the acceptance or rejection of a Messiah whose kingdom is "not of this world," but altogether inward, spiritual, heavenly.

CHAPTER IV.

MESSIANIC HINTS IN THE PROPHETS DOWN TO THE ASSYRIAN EXILE.

(B.C. 825—722.)

THERE are few, if any, intimations (certainly no distinct ones) of the Messianic expectation in the historical Scriptures following the Pentateuch; namely, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings and Chronicles. Of those which appear in the Psalms of the same periods, the most striking have been cited in the previous Chapter.

The Jewish Monarchy which, under its first two kings, suggested, as we have seen, the more distinct expression of a national hope, was broken up on the death of its third king, Solomon, after 120 years' duration. Never a large kingdom, whether according to contemporary or modern ideas, it became thenceforth two very feeble ones. The Northern kingdom, variously called Israel, The Ten Tribes, Ephraim or Joseph (from its principal tribe), and Samaria (from its capital city), was the weaker of the two, the less prosperous, the more frequently seduced into idolatry; and it had no continuity of succession to its throne, eight dynasties occupying it during its period of 253 years. It came to an end 722 B.C., by the Assyrian conquest under Shalmanezer and the deportation of the ablest classes of its people, with an immediate view on the conqueror's part,

it is probable, to the peopling of his new-built city of Nineveh.

The Southern kingdom, Judah, containing the powerful tribes of Judah and Benjamin with the little remains of Simeon, was the more compact and stronger of the two, and was more generally (though by no means uniformly) observant of the Mosaic worship; it preserved its line of kings unbroken, and continued to exist 134 years after the Northern kingdom had fallen. It was conquered by the Babylonians B.C. 588, when the best of its inhabitants were carried into the land of the conquerors.

During these periods the prophets, in each kingdom, were among the first and most earnest to notice the dangers impending from foreign powers, and to connect them with national sin and irreligion, as divine punishments only to be escaped by timely reformation and obedience. With increasing zeal and urgency, these men preach the forgotten or slighted laws of worship and pure morals, mingling predictions of weal or woe, more or less contingent in tone, till at length they become absolute in their despair. But still a better hope encourages them to look beyond captivity for restoration and prosperity.

The written books of the Jewish prophets belong almost exclusively to the period of the divided monarchy, and to that of the return of Judah from the Babylonish exile. From the Assyrian there was no recorded return. Israel was lost among other nations. The Messianic hope is developed into its Jewish completeness in these writings.

The present Chapter is devoted to the first of these three periods,—the century preceding the Assyrian exile.

It will be convenient to set down in their order the kings of the two monarchies belonging to this period:

JUDAH.	B.C.	ISRAEL.
		825 Jeroboam II.
Uzziah (or Azariah)	811	784 (Interregnum ?).
		773 Zechariah (son of Jer.).
		„ Shallum (usurper).
		„ Menahem (usurper).
		761 Pekahiah (son of M.).
Jotham (son of Uz.)	759	759 Pekah (usurper).
Ahaz (son)	743	745 [Transjordanic and Galilean tribes carried into Assyria.]
Hezekiah (son).....	{ 728 to 699	740 (Interregnum ?). 730 Hoshea (usurper). 722 Assyrian captivity.

To this table must be added a brief abstract of the history, so far as relates to the kingdom of Israel and the Assyrian invasion, as the best key to the prophecies of the time. From 2 Kings xiv. to xvii. chapters, we learn the following facts :

Jeroboam II., king of Israel, in his long and able, but idolatrous, reign of forty-one years, had recovered the northern and eastern territories from the Syrians and even taken possession of their capital city Damascus (xiv. 23—29); Jonah the prophet encouraging him.

In the reign of Menahem, Pul, king of Assyria, invaded Israel, but was bought off for a thousand talents of silver, which the king exacted from his richest subjects (xv. 19, 20). His son Pekahiah reigned only two years, when he was assassinated by Pekah, one of his captains, who then reigned twenty years (25—27). In the reign of Pekah Tiglath-Pileser (the successor of Pul), king of Assyria,

carried away the transjordanic and northern tribes (29). Pekah (it is not explained why) joined hands with Rezin, king of Syria, to attack Judah, in the reign of Ahaz. They besieged him in Jerusalem, but could not overcome him; but Rezin took from him the port of Elath on the Red Sea; and Ahaz then sought alliance with Tiglath-Pileser; who readily granted it for his own ends, besieged Damascus, killed Rezin and carried off the Syrian population (xvi. 5—9). Hoshea, who slew Pekah and usurped his throne, was the last king of Samaria, reigning nine years. He was invaded (as was to be expected) by Shalmanezer, the successor of Tiglath-Pileser, and forced to pay tribute. He applied to Egypt for help, whereupon Shalmanezer besieged his capital and brought his kingdom to an end, carrying away the chief part of his people, as his predecessor had done those of the outlying parts of the land.

The prophets belonging to this period are, Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, Zechariah, Nahum and Joel. And this is their apparent order of time, unless, as some think, Joel should be placed among the earliest. We shall analyze the general contents of each prophet, and quote in full what may be called his Messianic passages.

JONAH does not furnish anything that concerns our present purpose. His message to Jeroboam II. is not preserved in writing. The *book* of Jonah belongs to a much later period. It is a book *about* Jonah, not *by* Jonah; and has been appropriately called "a moral tale, not to be taken as a true story."

AMOS dates his own prophecies as spoken in the reigns of Uzziah in Judah and Jeroboam II. in Israel; and, though himself a Judahite, preaches expressly to Israel. He tells us he was a herdsman and gatherer of sycamore

fruit, when Jehovah said to him, "Go, prophesy unto my people Israel" (vii. 14, 15). He reproves their luxury, oppressions and idolatry; and denounces, first in general terms, the divine judgments against them. He sees, in vision, the Almighty preparing a swarm of locusts for their punishment; but he intreats forgiveness, and the Eternal repented and said, It shall not be. Then he sees fire prepared for their destruction, and intercedes again with like success. Then he sees a plumb-line (or levelling-line) in the hand of the Eternal, against which there is no interceding; it is the emblem of resolved ruin. The Assyrian captivity is repeatedly anticipated (chap. iii. 12, v. 27, vi. 7, vii. 17, ix. 1—5); but it is to be remarked that the prophet seems to think the captivity *immediately* at hand; whereas it did not happen till above sixty years after king Jeroboam's death. Yet mercy is mingled with these denunciations. The house of Jacob shall not be utterly destroyed, though Israel shall be sifted; and the prophecy concludes with the promise of return, and apparently the hope of the re-union of the two kingdoms. Repentance will be the preliminary to those better times:

Behold the days are coming, saith the Lord, the Eternal,* that I will send a famine on the land;
Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water; but of
hearing the words of the ETERNAL.* (viii. 11.)

* * * * *

* This expressive substitute for the Hebrew name *Jehovah* is usual in the Genevan French version of the Old Testament, *L'Éternel*. It is adopted by Dr. Rowland Williams, with excellent taste, in his translation of the Hebrew Prophets (1866), except where (as in Obadiah) it seems to have a sort of *patriotic* exclusiveness. "In cases where it is connected with a nobler and more enduring spirit, it deserves to be rendered THE ETERNAL; for such is the profound idea which it once conveyed of God as the only True Being." (P. 83.)

In that day I will raise up the fallen tabernacle of David, and will close up the breaches thereof; And I will raise up its ruins and build it as in the days of old ; That they who are called by my name may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations, saith the Eternal who doeth this. Behold the days are coming, saith the Eternal, that the ploughman shall draw near to the reaper, and the treader of grapes to him that soweth the seed ;* And the mountains shall drop new wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. And I will bring back the captives of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them ; And they shall plant vineyards and drink the wine thereof ; They shall also make gardens and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be rooted up from the land which I have given them, saith the Eternal, thy God.

(ix. 11—15.)

This prophecy may have been delivered sixty-five or seventy years before the captivity (king Jeroboam died sixty-two years before it), when already the Assyrian power was formidable. The most remarkable thing is, that it anticipates the return of the nation from captivity, which never actually occurred to the Assyrian captives of

* i.e. shall follow each other in due rotation, uninterrupted by war and captivity (Grotius) ; or, as some say, the harvest and vintage shall be so abundant as not to be disposed of before ploughing and sowing are again due.

the kingdom of Israel, but only to the Babylonian exiles of Judah of a much later date.

HOSEA, like Amos, dates his own prophecies as belonging to the reigns of Jeroboam in Israel and of Uzziah in Judah, but adds the names of the three successors of Uzziah, namely, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. We cannot carry him down beyond the very beginning of Hezekiah's reign, if we place the opening of his mission at the very end of Jeroboam's, as this makes fifty-six years (B.C. 784—728). Dr. Rowland Williams dates the composition of the book B.C. 723—721 (the era of the captivity); but supposes it to embody the reflections of many troubled years preceding. The kingdom of Israel had fallen into weakness and confusion ever since the death of its able king, Jeroboam II. Hosea had seen the invasion of Pul, the tribute-paying of Menahem, and the deportation of the north-eastern Israelites by Tiglath-Pileser. His remonstrances are addressed chiefly, but by no means exclusively, to the house of Israel. Judah is joined in many of his appeals; but he sees the captivity of the former plainly at hand (viii. 5—14, ix. 3*). Of Judah there is still hope: "Let Judah not offend" (iv. 15); and the nation shall be re-united. In the opening chapter all this is plainly said:

I will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel. * * * I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away. But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Eternal their God. * * * Yet

* It is to be remarked, however, that the prophet seems doubtful whether their captivity will be in Assyria, or in Egypt, or both. This would date the book in the reign of king Hoshea, who sought help from Egypt.

the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea which cannot be measured or numbered. * * * Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together and appoint themselves one head, and shall come up out of the land. (i. 4—7, 10, 11.)

Some of Hosea's denunciations indeed (and the same may be said of other prophets) look more like *contingent* warnings than absolute predictions. The alternative of repentance is continually offered. The prevailing figure used by him is a very powerful one, though distasteful to modern and western ears, when he represents the delinquencies of Israel as so many acts of unfaithfulness to the marriage vow. God (as imaged in his prophet) has an adulterous wife and spurious offspring. But the indignant prophet is often tender too.

The concluding verses of Hosea are the chief passage that foreshadows better days to come; and this not in a highly exalted strain. The burden is, that if Israel will repent and return, the Eternal will yet save them from destruction—which had just been denounced as inevitable. The figures are, however, so moderate as scarcely to be ranked with the *Messianic*. It is only as an approach towards higher figures of the same order, that Hosea can illustrate our subject :

O Israel, return to the Eternal, thy God ; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.

Take with you words (such as these), and return to the Eternal, saying :

“ Pardon all our iniquity and receive us graciously ; so will we render the fruit of our lips.

Assyria shall not be our Saviour ; we will not ride upon horses ;

Neither will we say any more to the work of our
hands, Ye are our Gods ;
For in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.”
So I will heal their backsliding, I will love them
freely ; for mine anger is turned away from him.
I will be as the dew to Israel ; he shall blossom as the
lily, and strike his roots like Lebanon.
His suckers shall spread, and his beauty shall be as
the olive-tree, and his fragrance as Lebanon.
They that dwell under his shadow shall return ; they
shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine
whose renown is as the wine of Lebanon.
Ephraim shall say, “What have I to do any more
with idols ?”
I have heard him and observed him, even I ; like a
luxuriant cypress, from me thy fruit shall be found.
Who is wise to understand these things ? Prudent to
know them ?
For the ways of the Eternal are right, and the just shall
walk in them ; but transgressors shall fall therein.

(xiv. 1—end.)

Let us sum up the teaching and aspirations of the Messianic poets and prophets thus far.

They have the high religious belief taught by revelation, and a high perception of moral duty arising out of it. They see the dangers impending over their nation from their more powerful heathen neighbours. They believe that temporal evil will fall upon personal and national sin. They denounce the vices, corruptions and oppressions of the men of their day. They remonstrate earnestly against idolatry and its ever-attendant vices. They enjoin timely repentance and reformation, and promise divine forgiveness upon those conditions. They speak of captivity as impend-

ing at the hands of those formidable Assyrians, unless timely repentance shall avert it. But they also believe in the merciful disposition of the Eternal to restore his people to their own land in peace, if, after captivity among the heathen, their repentance shall even then intitle them to his renewed favour. And they believe that the future days of the restored Israel will be far brighter than the past. Such is the state of the Jewish hope through these earlier prophets. It will deepen, strengthen and brighten under Micah and Isaiah, and fasten itself upon a royal personage as its earliest realization.

MICAH and ISAIAH were, as nearly as possible, contemporary. They both date themselves as prophesying in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah ; to which Isaiah prefixes the name of Uzziah, but tells us in his sixth chapter that his call to the prophetic office only took place in the year of Uzziah's death. Isaiah probably continued to prophesy longer than Micah, and seems to have survived king Hezekiah. Both these prophets witnessed the fall of the kingdom of Israel and the Assyrian invasion of Judah. If for no other reason than that Micah is very much the less copious of the two, it may be convenient to analyze his writings first. He addresses both Samaria and Judah ; Isaiah speaks to Judah only.

Recurring to the history with more particular reference to the kingdom of Judah, we have to remember that the administration of Uzziah, during his long reign of fifty-two years, was able and successful. He became leprous in the latter part of it, and his son Jotham took part in the government, and reigned after him for sixteen years. During these two reigns Judah evidently gained strength, and was magnanimously forbearing towards Israel, which was meanwhile distracted with war and anarchy. Ahaz,

the son and successor of Jotham, reversed the religious policy of his predecessors and encouraged the idolatrous propensities of the Judahites, "passing his own son through the fire" to Moloch. It has already been mentioned that in his reign Rezim king of Syria, in league with Pekah king of Israel, besieged Jerusalem unsuccessfully, but took the port of Eloth on the Red Sea; and that Ahaz, thus pressed, made alliance with the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser, and took Damascus. The two kings met at Damascus by appointment; and compliments passed between them, which were far from being approved by the adherents of the Mosaic Law in Jerusalem; especially by Isaiah, who has various prophecies against "the Assyrian, the rod of Jehovah's anger," the mere instrument in his hand.

Hezekiah, one of the most religious and firmly monotheistic of the Judahite kings, succeeded his idolatrous father, Ahaz, after a fifteen years' reign. He seems to have been brought up under the influence of Isaiah, whose political ascendency in his court was afterwards considerable; and it is easy to understand how all the brightest religious and national hopes would centre upon this young prince, with tacit trust, during his father's reign, and burst into enthusiasm on his accession, whether at twenty-five, or perhaps fifteen, years of age. In the fourth year of his reign the siege of Samaria began, which ended in the destruction of the Northern kingdom. And in the fourteenth, Sennacherib (the son of Shalmanezer) invaded the kingdom of Judah, took Lachish and other towns, and laid Hezekiah under tribute. Preparations for the siege of Jerusalem followed; but the besieger was called away from his project by the rumour of an attack upon Assyria on the part of Tirhakah, king of Upper Egypt. (See 2 Kings xix. 7—9.)

It is natural to think that the chief part of the prophetic

utterances of these times had immediate reference to these engrossing national events, and to the character and conduct of the king of Judah in connection with them ; and it is only by a forced and unnatural interpretation that they have been applied, even secondarily, to the long distant mission of Jesus Christ. At any rate, it is proper, in reading Micah and Isaiah especially, to realize as fully as possible the contemporary events amid which they spoke and wrote.

MICAH. The prophet Jeremiah (xxvi. 18) assigns Micah's prophecies specifically to the reign of Hezekiah, quoting his declaration that "Zion shall be ploughed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest." An allusion by Micah to Lachish (i. 13), where Hezekiah treated with the Assyrian on the basis of paying tribute (2 Kings xviii. 14), seems to mark the time when this part of the prophecy was delivered. And there are similar marks of time (in iv. 9 and v. 1), where "the ruler of Israel" is declared to have been "smitten on the cheek," and the prophet expostulates with Judah: "Why dost *thou* cry aloud ? Is there no king in *thee* ? Is thy counsellor perished?" Plainly, Micah speaks of the capture of the Israelitish king Hoshea, the invasion of the kingdom of Judah, and the threatened (but averted) fall of Jerusalem.

His topics are as follows :

Chap. i. The Eternal testifies against the sins of Samaria and of Judah : He will make Samaria as a heap of the field, and lay her foundations bare. Her wound is incurable ; it is come to Judah ; it reaches the gate of Jerusalem.

Ch. ii. iii. Oppressive rulers and false prophets are denounced, and (iii. 12) "Zion shall be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem become heaps, and the mountain

of the House (temple) become as the heights of a forest.”*

This denunciation is immediately followed by the most glowing *Messianic* passage that we have thus far met with (ch. iv. v.) :

But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the House of the Eternal shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and peoples shall flow unto it.

And many nations shall come and say : “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Eternal, and to the house of the God of Jacob ; that He may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.”

For the Law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Eternal from Jerusalem.

And He shall judge among many peoples, and be umpire for strong nations afar off ; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks ; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid : for the mouth of the Eternal hath spoken it.†

* This seems as if the prophet half anticipated the destruction of Jerusalem from the then impending siege. It has no apparent reference to the Babylonish invasion of 120 years afterwards.

† This beautiful passage is found also, nearly word for word, in Is. ii. 2—5 ; the chief variation being, that in Isaiah the *sitting under his own vine and fig-tree* is not introduced ; which may possibly intimate that Micah’s is a revised presentation of Isaiah’s original thought, or, it may be, of a thought neither his own nor Isaiah’s originally, but already belonging to the *commonplaces* of Hebrew Messianic poetry. The prophecy goes on with distinct allusions to the national events of Hezekiah’s reign.

Though all peoples walk every one in the name of his god, yet we will walk in the name of the Eternal our God for ever and ever.

In that day, saith the Eternal, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that was driven forth, and her that I have afflicted;

And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation; and the Eternal shall reign over them in Mount Zion thenceforth, even for ever.

And thou, O Migdol-Eder (Tower of the flock), stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee it shall come, even the former dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.

Now why dost thou cry out aloud? Is there no king in thee? Is thy counsellor perished? that pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail.

Be in pangs, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail; for now thou shalt go forth out of the city, and dwell in the field, and thou shalt go even unto Babylon,* there shalt thou

* The mention of *Babylon* is perplexing, where every circumstance points to the impending danger from *Assyria*. Some critics suppose this verse to have been added after the Babylonian captivity. But I venture to suggest that Babylon and Assyria were at this time almost interchangeable terms, in poetry at least. Their mutual relations during this period are very obscure to the historian, who only knows that the Assyrian empire by and by merged in the Babylonian. We learn from Isaiah xxxix. 1, that "Merodach-baladan, son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah" on his recovery from illness; and the book of Chronicles (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11) says that the king of Assyria took Manasseh (Hezekiah's son) in fetters to Babylon. The chronicler at least regarded both as one empire. Herodotus even, in his account of the taking of Babylon by Cyrus (*Hist.* i. 178), speaks of that city as one of the chief strongholds of the Assyrians, when, according to modern ideas, the Assyrian empire had given place to the Babylonian.

be delivered ; there the Eternal shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies.

And now many nations are gathered against thee, that say : " Let her be defiled, and let our eye gaze its fill on Zion."

But they know not the thoughts of the Eternal, neither understand they his counsel ;

For he shall gather them as sheaves into the threshing-floor.

Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion ; for I will make thy horn iron and thy hoofs I will make brass ; and thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples, and devote their spoil to the Eternal, and their substance to the Lord of the whole earth.

Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops ; they have laid siege against us ; they have smitten the Judge (Ruler) of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.

But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah,* little to be counted among the leaders of Judah ; out of thee cometh forth unto me one who is to be Ruler in Israel, whose origin is from the ancient age, from the days of old.

Therefore will He deliver them up until the time when she that travaileth shall have brought forth ; and the rest of his brethren shall return to the sons of Israel.

Then he shall stand and feed (his flock) in the strength of the Eternal, in the majesty of the name of the Eternal his God, and they shall abide ; for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

And this man shall be (our) safety when the Assyrian

* Birthplace of David, who was the head of the royal dynasty of Judah.

shall come into our land ; and when he shall tread in our palaces, then will we raise up against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men.

And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, the land of Nimrod within her gates ; thus he shall deliver us from the Assyrian when he cometh into our land and when he treadeth within our borders.

So the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples, as dew from the Eternal, as showers upon the grass, tarrying not for man, nor waiting for the sons of men.

And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among flocks of sheep ; who, if he go through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.

And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Eternal, that I will cut off thine horses* from the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots ;

And I will cut off the cities of thy land and throw down all thy strongholds ;

And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers ;

Thy graven images also will I cut off and thy statues from the midst of thee ; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands.

And I will pluck up thy groves (or, statues of Astarte, the moon goddess) out of the midst of thee, and will destroy thy cities.

* Horses, as material of war, were forbidden by the Jewish Law.
(Deut. xvii. 16.)

And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon
the nations which have not hearkened unto me.*

(Ch. v. end.)

The remainder of the book of Micah is quite a distinct portion (or portions), which may, likely enough, have been uttered on a different occasion, but need not be ascribed (as some have thought) to a different writer.

The sixth chapter opens with one of the finest passages in the Bible. The Eternal has a controversy, or cause, to plead with his people on their ingratitude for his favours ever since He brought them out of Egypt. The question is solemnly asked, "Wherewith shall I come before the Eternal? Shall I come with burnt offerings and sacrifices?" And it is plainly answered, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Eternal require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Ingenious commentators have been inclined to think that some traditional words of Balak and

* On this remarkable passage and the different interpretations which have been found for it, the most recent English translator observes:

"The religious zeal and courage of Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii. 4—7) mark him out as a prince likely to encourage the prophet's hope, that out of David's house was already rising a shepherd, unlike the short-lived dynasties which had usurped Samaria. Even if he does not mean, without naming, Hezekiah, he is confident that the divine right of the ancient line of Bethlehem (little as the town may be reckoned) will prevail. Naturally and innocently, later Jews, suffering from Babylonian, Syrian, Roman, applied the old words to their ever fresh hopes of David's realm reviving: later Christians, learning that God's kingdom is of the mind, saw in Jesus their Lord a better King, by the same right as in the Church a better Jerusalem. Both interpretations, though mutually antagonistic, proceed fundamentally on a like system of re-adapting the ancient letter. I do not dispute how far God designed what He has actually permitted; but my business as interpreter is with the meaning of Micah, who has in his eye deliverance from the contemporary Assyrian." (*Hebrew Prophets*, by Rowland Williams, D.D., p. 186.)

Balaam are here preserved (see Newcome's *Minor Prophets, in loc.*); but it is difficult to make this out, and the sentiment is higher than seems appropriate to either Balak or Balaam. (See Numb. xxii.—xxiv.) It teaches truth, virtue and religion, for all times. In its light the prophet goes on to reprove injustice and oppression; but (in the vii., the concluding, chapter) he seems almost to despair as to the results of his mission. Still the book ends with holding out the hope of deliverance and prosperity, apparently in the expectation that the captives in Assyria and Egypt will return to their land and be united in one kingdom with Judah. But this is not spoken in such high *Messianic* strain as the fourth and fifth chapters. Jerusalem, or Israel, has plaintively said :

Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy ; though I am fallen, I shall arise ; though I sit in darkness, the Eternal will be a light to me.

I will bear the indignation of the Eternal, because I have sinned against Him, until He plead my cause and execute judgment for me ; until He bring me forth to the light, and I behold his righteousness.

Then mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her that said unto me, "Where is the Eternal, thy God ? Let mine eyes look their fill upon her ; now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets."

[The prophet responds]:

The day (cometh) when thy walls shall be rebuilt ; the day when the decree shall be far removed ; the day when they shall come to thee from Assyria and from the fortified cities, and from Egypt even to the river, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain.

Yet the land shall (first) be desolate because of them
that dwell therein, ~~for~~ the fruit of their doings.

Feed thy people with thy crook, the flock of thine
heritage, that dwelleth solitarily in the wood in the
midst of Carmel ; let them feed in Bashan and
Gilead as in the days of old ; as in the days of thy
coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew thee
marvellous things.

The nations shall see and be confounded out of all
their might ; they shall lay their hand upon their
mouth, their ears shall be deaf ; they shall lick the
dust as a serpent ; they shall come trembling out of
their holes like reptiles of the earth ; to the Eter-
nal our God they shall come with awe, and shall
fear because of thee.

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity
and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of
his heritage ? He retaineth not his anger for ever,
because He delighteth in mercy.

He will turn again, He will have compassion upon
us ; He will subdue our iniquities ; yea, thou wilt
cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou
wilt shew faithfulness to Jacob, mercy to Abraham,
which thou hast sworn to our fathers from the days
of old.

From this high faith in the holiness and goodness of
God, the Hebrew prophets drew their national and patriotic
hopes.

ISAIAH. His visions are limited, in the title of the book,
to Judah and Jerusalem. They do not separately affect
Samaria ; but they touch many other nations. They relate
chiefly to the Syro-Israelitic war (ch. viii.) and the series

of Assyrian invasions (viii.—xii. xx., &c). Chapters vii. and xxxvi. to xxxix. are historical.

But every careful reader of the Jewish Scriptures must have observed that the later chapters of Isaiah (beginning with the fortieth) are quite in a new strain, and refer to a much later period than most of the former part. The former part belongs to the reign of Hezekiah chiefly, when the Assyrian captivity has just taken place, but the Babylonish is not yet even impending in the dim distance. Or rather, any danger that threatens Judah seems to be from this same now-conquering Assyria. But the later chapters of Isaiah belong to the period of the nation's return from that Babylonish captivity of seventy years, which only began 112 years after Hezekiah's death. Those chapters describe and celebrate the return home, with all the natural joy (mixed with natural anxiety) of redeemed captives. Criticism confirms and defines this judgment of common sense; and it is now perfectly understood that the later chapters of Isaiah (xl.—end) belong to a much later period, having been written, it may be, by another prophet of the same name, but certainly not by the Isaiah of Hezekiah's reign. There are also a few passages in the earlier chapters, relating to Babylon, which seem to belong to the later Isaiah. I distribute them accordingly, taking the first Isaiah as contemporary with Micah, and placing the younger Isaiah with the captives returning from Babylon long afterwards.

Ch. i. (which need not, however, have been the first spoken by the prophet) is a fine remonstrance against the wickedness of the favoured people. Their country is under invasion; their land desolate; their cities burnt. This probably marks the joint invasion of the Syrians and Israelites in the reign of Ahaz.

Ch. ii. iii. iv. This next section, with a separate title applying it to *Judah and Jerusalem*, begins with the splendid anticipation already quoted from Micah (p. 48) : "It shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the House of the Eternal shall be established on the top of the mountains," &c. Then follow expostulation and reproach for the many offences against the Law and against morals; sorcery, use of war-horses, idolatry; personal pride, vanity and ostentation. A day of judgment is threatened; famine, poverty and war. Forgiveness is promised when "the filth of Zion shall be washed away."

Ch. v. begins with a fine fable or parable of the *Vineyard of the Eternal*, his care in the culture of the vine brought from Egypt; its unfruitfulness; its coming desolation. War is approaching.

In ch. vi. (which might have headed the book, had the first editor seen fit so to place it), Isaiah gives a sublime account of his call to the prophetic office, and his mission to denounce judgment.

Chap vii. brings us face to face with the history, when, in the reign of Ahaz, Rezin king of Syria and Pekah of Judah attempt the siege of Jerusalem. The idolatrous king is appalled. Isaiah, the prophet-politician, takes his own young son by the hand to meet the king, and assures him, in the name of the Eternal, that within sixty-five years (if this verse is genuine, and the *number* not in error) Ephraim shall cease to be a people; and also (what throws suspicion on the former number of years) that, before the child of a young woman then pregnant shall be able to choose good and refuse evil, "the land shall become desolate, by whose two kings thou art distressed."

Isaiah's child, whom he takes with him, is emblem-

atically called *Shear-jashub* (Remnant-shall-return, or repent). The young woman* designated is most naturally understood as the prophet's wife ; and the son whom she is to bear is to be called *Immanuel* (God-with-us). It is to be observed that in the next chapter (viii.) another son (or perhaps the same) is mentioned as born and being called *Maher-shalal-hash-baz* (Haste-spoil, Speed-plunder). *Messianic* passages (so called) are involved here. Let the whole be read in its connection of verses (from vii. 3 to ix. 7) and in view of the history :

Ch. vii. 3. Then said the Eternal unto Isaiah: Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou and Shear-jashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, in the highway of the fuller's field, and say unto him :

Take heed and be calm ; fear not, neither be faint-hearted, on account of the two ends of these smoking fire-brands, on account of the fierce anger of Rezin with the Syrians, and of the son of Remaliah.

Because Syria hath devised evil against thee, with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, saying, Let us go up against Judah and vex her, and make a breach therein for ourselves, and set a king in the midst of her, even the son of Tabeal ;†

Thus saith the Lord, the Eternal : It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass ; though the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin [and within three score and five years shall

* This is the exact meaning of the Hebrew—*the young woman*. The Septuagint translates ἡ παρθένος (*the virgin*), whence many strange theological questions have arisen. The other Greek versions of Symmachus, Aquila and Theodotian, give νήπιη; correctly (*young woman*). And it is not *a* young woman, but *the* young woman ; one specifically pointed out by the prophet and understood by king Ahaz.

† A person quite unknown in the history.

Ephraim be broken that he be not a people*]; though the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son.

If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

Moreover, the Eternal spake again unto Ahaz, saying : Ask thee a sign of the Eternal thy God ; ask it either in the depth or in the height above.

But Ahaz said : I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Eternal.†

And he said : Hear ye now, O house of David : Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also ? Therefore the Eternal himself will give you a sign :

Behold, this young woman conceiveth and beareth a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (*God-with-us*).

Butter and honey shall he eat when he shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good ;‡

For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land shall become desolate by whose two kings thou art distressed.

The Eternal is bringing upon thee and upon thy people and upon thy father's house, days that have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah (even the king of Assyria).

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Eternal will hist for the fly that is in the uttermost part of

* Conjecturally omitted by Dr. Rowland Williams. It interrupts the sentence, and is inconsistent with the *sign* of the child Immanuel. Instead of *sixty-and-five* years, it has been proposed to read *six and five* (six or five, that is).

† Ahaz was probably already resolved on seeking alliance with Assyria, and would not court discouragement.

‡ So soon shall comparative plenty be restored to the kingdom.

the rivers of Egypt,* and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria ; and they shall come and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorn-bushes and all pastures.

In the same day will the Eternal shave, with the razor hired from beyond the river (with the king of Assyria), the head and the hair of the feet, and it shall also take away the beard.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow and two sheep ; and it shall come to pass, from the abundance of milk that they shall give, that he shall eat butter ; for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that every place where there were a thousand vines worth a thousand pieces of silver, shall be for briars and thorns ; with arrows and with bows shall men come thither, because all the land shall become briars and thorns.

And all the hills that were digged with the spade, there thou shalt not go for fear of briars and thorns ; but they shall be for the sending forth of oxen and for the treading of sheep.

That is to say : " Only the shepherd's artless art shall retain its use ; milk, butter, honey, may be found in the wilder corners of the country, for the young child to eat ;— saving only the wild hills, the Egyptian or Assyrian razor shaves Palestine in its widest extent bare." (Williams's *Hebrew Prophets*, pp. 264, 265.)

* Isaiah has the same feeling as Micah and Hosea, that Egypt as well as Assyria may become the scourge of unfaithful Israel and Judah. This became true in Josiah's reign, above 100 years after ; but not till then.

Ch.viii. Moreover, the Eternal said unto me: Take thee a great tablet, and write upon it with a man's pen [workman's graving tool ?] concerning *Maher-shalal-hash-baz* (Haste-spoil, Speed-plunder). And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. And I went (had gone?) unto the prophetess; and she conceived and bare a son.

And the Eternal said to me: Call his name *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*; for before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father and My mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.*

The Eternal spake also unto me again, saying:

Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah,† that go softly, and rejoiceth in Rezin and Remaliah's son;

Now therefore behold, the Eternal bringeth upon them the waters of the river strong and mighty, even the king of Assyria and all his glory; and he shall come up over all his channels and go over all his banks.

And he shall pass through Judah, overflowing and spreading, till he reaches up to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.

[But it shall all be in vain as regards Judah.]

Associate yourselves, O ye peoples; and ye shall be

* The opinion is as old as Jerome, that this child was the same as Immanuel promised in the previous chapter. Dr. Williams thinks it "pretty clear that his mother called him by the name of blessing, his father by that of warning." Perhaps neither, *habitually and exclusively*.

† Shiloh in Ephraim, where the tabernacle anciently was; a place ever sacred to Jewish thought, and a metaphor of peace.

broken in pieces ; and give ear, all ye of far countries : Gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces ; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought ; speak the word, and it shall not stand ; for *God is with us*. (*IMMANUEL* is our token, our watch-word.)

For the Eternal spake thus to me as, taking me by the hand, He instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying : Say not, " It is a confederacy " of everything which this people shall call a confederacy ; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.

Sanctify the Eternal of Hosts himself ; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And He shall be a sanctuary to you ; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many shall stumble thereon and fall and be broken, and ensnared and taken.

Bind up the testimony ; seal the command among my disciples. And I will wait for the Eternal, who hideth his face from the house of Jacob ; and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children* whom the Eternal hath given me are for signs and tokens in Israel from the Eternal of Hosts, who dwelleth in Mount Zion.

[Divination and sorcery, too often imitated from their Syrian neighbours, are now denounced, and the revival of

* " This verse furnishes a key to the preceding chapter, and to this, up to this point ; but not to the passage ten verses lower down. Isaiah's children are *Remnant-repent* and *Haste-spoil*, the latter being surnamed *With-us-is-God*. The Prince of Peace mentioned below as having been born, is some one sitting, or destined to sit, on the throne of David." (Dr. R. Williams, p. 270, after Grotius and many others.)

prosperity is promised to the northern region of Galilee, lately ravaged by Tiglath-Pileser. This part of Isaiah probably belongs to the time when Ahaz and Tiglath-Pileser had taken Damascus and conquered the Syrians.]

And when they shall say unto you: Seek unto them that have familiar spirits (necromancers), and unto wizards that chirp and mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? for the living will ye seek to the dead? To the law and to the testimony. If they speak not according to this word, it is because light dawneth not on them. And they shall pass through distressed and hungry; and it shall come to pass that when they shall be hungry, they will fret themselves, and curse their king and their God; and will look upward, and look upon the earth, and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish, and they shall be driven into darkness.

Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at first He lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict the land by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Thou hast multiplied the nation and increased its joy; they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For thou hast broken the yoke of its burden and the staff on its shoulder, the rod of its oppressor, as in the day of Midian. For all the armour of him that armed tumultuously, and the garment

rolled in blood, shall be for burning, fuel for the fire.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given ; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty Hero, Father of the Age, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Eternal of Hosts will perform this. (Ch. ix. 7.)

Prejudice and mystical interpretation apart, there can be no hesitation as to the meaning of this passage. It points to prince Hezekiah, twelve or fourteen years old (taking him to have been twenty-five, as stated 2 Kings xviii. 2, at his accession). On him the best hopes of the nation, sorely tried by the idolatrous practices of Ahaz, earnestly rested; and to his young promise Isaiah turns with patriotic and religious confidence. It is not surprising that uncritical Bible readers should have found a readier interpretation by applying to Jesus Christ whatever seems appropriate to him and neglecting all that is evidently inappropriate. But more reasonable and consistent interpretations must now be sought.

“Something of ideal exaltation” (says Dr. R. Williams) “tinges the passage poetically, as in Jacob’s blessing on his sons, Virgil’s eclogue on the child of Augustan hope, Shakspeare’s anticipation for the infant Elizabeth ; or, returning to a more sacred (yet hardly more blest) instance, as in the prayer for some infant (?) prince in the 72nd Psalm. We should delude ourselves if, because Isaiah paints in glowing terms the good time coming under an heir of David’s throne, while he had a definite prince in his eye, we were to intrude upon him the notion of a

formal Messiah, which arose gradually out of applications of the words of ancient presentiment to each new object of homage, or creation of desire, of generations yet unborn. Messianic, if it must, let the passage be ; it only is so in a sense widely removed from the common. If any devout metaphysician can justify the grandest of later applications, by making the Eternal Mind of God foresee a remote object, to which the sketch drawn by man for the range of his vision should become ultimately applicable, I have no desire to contravene such a view, provided it can be made probable by reasoning, and proceed upon fair statement as its preliminary." (*Hebrew Prophets*, p. 274.)

This important passage having been produced in full and set in the clear light of its own history, it will be only necessary to analyze the remaining chapters of the elder Isaiah, and to quote, almost without comment, two remaining *Messianic* passages.

Ch. ix. 8—x. 4. A denunciation against the wickedness of Israel, probably belonging to an earlier period.

Ch. x. 5—xii. end. Prediction of the destruction of Assyria and the return of the Israelitish captives from all quarters to prosperity and happiness under a united kingdom. The Assyrian, with all his pride, is a mere tool in the hand of the Eternal to fulfil his purposes,—the axe in the hand of the wood-cutter,—and then his proud heart shall be punished. Two phrases of a former section are reproduced (x. 21) : "A remnant shall return, even a remnant of Jacob, to the Mighty Hero." The progress of the Assyrian army through the territory of Judah is graphically described (28—34); but Zion need not fear the invader. The figure changing, Jehovah will lop off his topmost shoot, and cut him down like a forest before the axe. Then comes a very remarkable *Messianic* passage of great beauty and force, which has furnished imagery to other poets, sacred and secular (ch. xi. and xii.).

And there shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. And the spirit of the Eternal shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Eternal.

And he shall be of quick discernment in the fear of the Eternal, so that he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears ; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the afflicted of the land ; and he shall smite the land with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together ; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed together ; their young ones shall lie down together ; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the new-weaned child shall put his hand on the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain ; for the land shall be full of the knowledge of the Eternal, as the waters cover the sea.*

And in that day shall the root of Jesse stand as a

* "Will the world ever become all peace? * * * The manifest figurativeness of images taken from lions and serpents, may suggest that images within the sphere of possibility have also their tinge of poetical feeling, and are not to be pressed too severely." (R. Williams's *Heb. Prophets*, p. 287.)

banner for the people, and to him shall the nations seek, and his resting-place shall be glorious.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Eternal shall put forth his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria and from Egypt and from Pathros (Upper Egypt) and from Ethiopia and from Elam (Western Persia) and from Shinar (Babylonia) and from Hamath (Syria), and from the islands of the sea.

Then the jealousy of Ephraim shall depart, and the enmity of Judah be at an end ; Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. But they shall invade the borders of the Philistines towards the west, and they shall together spoil the children of the east ; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab, and the children of Ammon shall obey them.

And the Eternal shall utterly destroy the tongue [bay?] of the Egyptian sea, and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river [Nile], and shall smite it into seven streams, that men may go over dry-shod. And there shall be a highway from Assyria for the remnant of his people which shall be left ; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

And in that day thou shalt say :

“ I will praise thee, O Eternal One !

Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me.

Behold, God is my salvation ; I will trust and not be afraid ;

For the Eternal is my strength and my song ; he also is become my salvation.”

So shall ye with joy draw water out of the wells of salvation ; and in that day shall ye say :
“ Praise the Eternal, call upon his name,
Declare his doings among the peoples,
Record ye how highly his name is exalted.
Sing unto the Eternal, for He hath done excellent things,
Let this be known in all the earth.
Cry aloud and shout for joy, thou inhabitant of Zion,
For great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.”

Here is indeed a strong Messianic hope ; but in what sense ? The import of these expectations plainly is :

“ When the Assyrian is smitten, there will be a prospect of David’s dynasty flourishing in Jerusalem, and of God’s restoring to Palestine both the captives of Shalmaneser, and all exiles scattered from Judah, by war or slavery, in northern or southern Egypt, Ethiopia, Persia, Babylonia, Syria and the Mediterranean isles. This would be another such deliverance as from Egypt. We may notice, this anticipation is 170 years before the return from Babylon (which Isaiah is not thinking of) ; but, so far as it is fulfilled thereby, the strictest views of prediction need not bind us to look for a third restoration of the Jews. Jehovah set to his hand a first time under Moses ; a second time under Cyrus.”
(*Heb. Prophets*, p. 288.)

The next ensuing chapters (xiii.—xxxii.) of the book of Isaiah are very miscellaneous and without arrangement or connection ; chiefly relating to neighbouring nations, and having little to do with our present subject.

Ch. xiii. 1—xiv. 23, *The Burden of Babylon*, belongs to a much later period, when the destruction of Babylon seemed to be impending. Perhaps it was written by the

later Isaiah of the Return. It contains a vivid and most poetical exultation over the fallen kingdom and its king, and will be reproduced in its place.

Ch. xiv. 24—27 seems to belong to the previous prophecy respecting the Assyrians.

Ch. xiv. 28—32 is a *Burden*, or Oracle, against Philistia, delivered in “the year that king Ahaz died.”

Ch. xv. and xvi. A burden of Moab is repeated from an older prophet unknown.

Ch. xvii. The burden of Damascus.

Ch. xviii. relates to Ethiopia or Upper Egypt, from which the welcome news of Tirhakah’s expedition against the Assyrians has been received.

Ch. xix. The burden of Egypt, includes a curious anticipation of Jehovahistic worship in that country, and of political and religious concord between the Israelites and the Egyptians on the one side, the Assyrians on the other.

Ch. xx. Egypt and Ethiopia are denounced.

Ch. xxi. 1—10. The burden of the *desert of the sea* (against Babylon); 11, 12, upon Dumah (or Edom); 13—17, upon Arabia.

Ch. xxii. The burden of “the valley of vision,” concerns Jerusalem under invasion by Sennacherib.

Ch. xxiii. is the burden of Tyre, referring to its invasion by Shalmanezer.

Ch. xxiv.—xxvii. probably belongs to the period of the Babylonish captivity when “the land is emptied” and “the city broken down,” but the confident hope of return is entertained. This passage, if quoted at all, must be reserved for the time of Jeremiah. But it so clearly points to the return from exile and to nothing else, that it does not need our attention in tracing the Jewish Messianic idea.

Ch. xxviii. brings us back to the time of Hezekiah. The

prophet denounces Ephraim, now invaded by the Assyrians, and warns Jerusalem.

Ch. xxix. is addressed to Ariel (Lion of God), meaning Jerusalem, threatened with siege.

Ch. xxx. xxxi. protest against alliance with Egypt; and

Ch. xxxii. expresses confidence in Jerusalem under its righteous king (Hezekiah). It is scarcely to be called Messianic in tone, though it is instructive to compare it with the more elevated descriptions of his reign already quoted :

Behold, a king shall rule in righteousness, and his princes shall rule with equity. And each of them shall be as a hiding-place from the wind and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. Even the heart of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly. The fool shall no more be called honourable, nor the churl said to be bountiful, &c.

Ch. xxxiii. denounces the Assyrians, now invading Judah and threatening Jerusalem itself, and exhorts to virtue and religious trust (10—22) :

Now will I arise, saith the Eternal; now will I be exalted, now will I lift up myself. * * * The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath seized the ungodly: Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting (perpetual) burnings?

He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that

stoppeth his ears from the hearing of bloodshed, and shutteth his eyes from looking on evil. He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the strongholds of rocks; his bread shall be given largely, his waters shall be unfailing. Thine eyes shall see the king in his majesty, and behold the land far extended. Thine heart shall meditate on the (past) terror: "Where is the accountant? Where is the weigher? Where is he that counted the towers?" Thou seest no more the fierce people, a people of obscure speech not to be understood, of stammering tongue, unintelligible.

Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the Eternal will be glorious to us, as a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Eternal is our judge, the Eternal is our lawgiver, the Eternal is our king: He will save us.

Such is the spirit of the prophets of Hezekiah's reign;— patriotic, religious, hopeful, trustful.

Ch. xxxiv. xxxv. plainly belong to the period of the Babylonian captivity, expressing strongly the hope of speedy return, and ending thus:

Yea, the ransomed of the Eternal shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Ch. xxxvi.—xxxix. are historical, and almost word for

word the same as 2 Kings xviii.—xx., containing the history of the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib.

And here the writings of the Isaiah of Hezekiah's reign end. I have analyzed them throughout and made very large extracts, as he is considered the most Christian, or evangelical, of the Hebrew prophets. The rest of the book, from ch. xl. to the end, was written by a prophet who lived during the return from Babylon, and shared and encouraged the enthusiasm of that great national event. His book will, in its proper place, be quoted in full. But Zechariah, Nahum and Joel, still remain, belonging to the Assyrian period.

ZECHARIAH. The *elder* Zechariah,—that is, the author of the second part of the book so named (from ch. ix. to the end),—prophesied against Syria and its capital, Damascus; also against Tyre, Sidon and Philistia.* The principal passage regarded as Messianic is one which is applied in the New Testament to the Saviour's entry into Jerusalem at the fatal Passover. In Zechariah it plainly means a king of his own day. Let it be read in its connection;—the prophet has denounced and defied Syria, Tyre and Sidon and Philistia;—he goes on (ix. 8—10):

And I will encamp about mine house with an army,
because of him that passeth by and him that return-
eth; and no oppressor shall pass through them any
more, for now I have seen with mine eyes.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter
of Jerusalem! Behold, thy king cometh unto thee;
he is just and having salvation, lowly and riding

* The first eight chapters belong to a prophet contemporary with the return from Babylon, and will be taken in that connection. Archbishop Newcome ascribes ch. xii. xiii. and xiv. to an intermediate period after the death of king Josiah. Ch. ix. to xi. chiefly concern us.

upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot (war-chariot) from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle-bow shall be cut off. And he shall speak peace unto the nations ; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the land [the extreme limits under David and Solomon].

In ch. x., national prosperity is confidently predicted, and the return of the captives from Egypt and Assyria promised.

And in ch. xiv. this is repeated, and the nations which came against Jerusalem are to keep the Feast of Tabernacles there annually ; or, on refusal, shall experience the Divine judgment in the suspension of rain.

NAHUM's prophecy is a Burden, or Oracle, against cruel and oppressive Nineveh. Judah is still standing, but threatened by the Assyrian power, against which the prophet denounces ruin. There is nothing Messianic in Nahum. Some place him later, about the time of king Josiah, when Assyria was harassed by the Medes and by the Scythians.

JOEL (placed by some critics earlier) has no new or different topics from the prophets thus far analyzed. His special figure (if it be a figure and not a simple fact) consists in a most vivid picture of successive swarms of locusts destroying all before them. This may be a description of actual fact, or it may be representative of the Assyrian invasion ; and the time assigned to Joel depends partly upon the view we take of this question. But he has little that can be called Messianic. We may quote ch. ii. 28—32, which is applied by Peter (Acts ii. 17) to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles :

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids, in those days, will I pour out my Spirit. And I will set wonders in the heavens and in the earth; blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Eternal come. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Eternal shall be delivered; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Eternal hath said, even upon the remnant whom the Eternal shall call.

And the prophet concludes with the *ideal* Judaism, "when I shall bring back the captives of Judah" (iii. 12—end):

I will sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. * * * Their wickedness is great. * * * The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Eternal also will thunder out of Zion and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shall shake. But the Eternal will be the hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Eternal, your God, dwelling in Zion my holy mountain; then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.

And it shall come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters; and a fountain shall come forth out of

the house of the Eternal, and shall water the valley of Shittim.

Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a wasted desert, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.

But Judah shall dwell for ever ; and Jerusalem from generation to generation ; for I will cleanse their bloodshed that I have not cleansed ; for the Eternal dwelleth in Zion.

Such are the aspirations and anticipations left on record, in their own words, by the Hebrew prophets during the first marked period, namely, down to the time of the Assyrian captivity. We have done little else than place them in chronological order (in amended translation, making them more intelligible), and set them, as far as possible, in their framework of contemporary history. Let these men speak their own meaning ; and if it was not always infallibly predictive, let us modify our too passive notion of their functions ; which we may do without diminution of genuine human and religious interest in their works and words, and with manifest improvement to our knowledge of Scripture, especially of the relation of the Old Testament to the New.

The history of the fall of the Northern Jewish kingdom is given in 2 Kings xvii. Hoshea, its last king (who came to the throne three years before Hezekiah of Judah), was invaded by Shalmanezer and laid under tribute ; but presently neglecting to pay it, in the hope of alliance with So, king of Egypt, he was invaded again by the Assyrian, and after a three years' siege of the city of Samaria, the captivity was completed in the ninth year of Hoshea's reign.

The conquered people (that is, the ablest and most useful of them) were carried away into Assyria and Media; and Cuthæans from the territories of the conqueror were brought to colonize Samaria. These were heathens, of course; but the king of Assyria sent one of the captive Israelitish priests to "teach them the manner of the God of the land." A mixture of Jewish and heathen observances prevailed among the mixed population, who became the Samaritans of subsequent times. The Ten Tribes henceforth vanish from distinct history. Some of the descendants of the Assyrian captives may indeed have returned to their land when, 140 years afterwards, Cyrus permitted the Jews throughout his vast dominions to do so. But most of them were already mixed and lost in the surrounding populations. They did not preserve their separate existence like the Judahites and Benjamites of the Babylonish captivity. The search of historians and theologians for the "lost tribes" is vain, and likely to be so.

CHAPTER V.

MESSIANIC EXPRESSIONS OF THE PROPHETS FROM THE ASSYRIAN TO THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.

(B.C. 722—588.)

THE kingdom of Judah survived the fall of Israel 134 years. Hezekiah's monotheistic reign of 29 years was followed by that of his son Manasseh, who, succeeding at twelve years of age, reigned 55 years. He favoured idolatrous practices, as his grandfather Ahaz had done. The book of Chronicles indeed states (2 Chron. xxxiii.)—what is not hinted in the book of Kings—that he was taken prisoner to Babylon by the Assyrian army, and, while there, besought Jehovah his God, and humbled himself, and was restored to his kingdom, and so learnt “that Jehovah is God.” His son Amon reigned only two years, and was followed by *his* son Josiah (eight years old, according to the common reading, but more probably eighteen), whose reign of 31 years once again shews a monotheistic and religious aspect. Zephaniah prophesied in his reign; and, in its thirteenth year, Jeremiah began his long prophetic career. King Josiah died in battle, gallantly resisting the passage of the king of Egypt through his northern dominions for the invasion of Assyria. The king of Egypt further avenged himself on Josiah's successor Shallum (called also Jehoahaz), by carrying him away prisoner and setting up his brother Eliakim (or Jehoiakim) as king instead. In the reign of Eliakim, the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah

and laid it under tribute. His son and successor, Jeconiah, or Jehoiachin, was carried away to Babylon, with his court and the craftsmen and all the strength of the land; only the poorest and most helpless being left. Mattaniah (a son of Josiah) was then made vassal-king, under the name Zedekiah; and he rebelling was besieged, and the ruin of his kingdom completed, twelve years after the captivity of Jeconiah. This was the Babylonish Captivity or Exile, B.C. 588.

The relations of Assyria, Babylon, Media and Persia, during this and the succeeding period, are somewhat obscure and intricate. But it seems clear that the power of Assyria had been broken from the time when Sennacherib (in Hezekiah's fourteenth year) had returned unsuccessful from his invasion of Judah and his intended expedition against Egypt. The Scythians invaded Assyria from the north, and (as just mentioned) the Egyptians were also tempted to make an attack upon it. Babylon, hitherto a subject province, soon asserted itself as a separate kingdom, under Merodach-Baladan and others. The Medes also revolted; and, joining the Babylonians, divided Assyria proper with them. But the Medes presently became subordinate to the Persians, from being their rulers (changing places as the Assyrians and Babylonians had done); and the Medo-Persian empire rose, under Cyrus, on the ruins of Babylon and of Assyria.

During the period shortly following Hezekiah's reign, the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem seem to have relapsed into undue security. The unexpected withdrawal of the Assyrian army from before their very walls, and the destruction of a great part of it in some mysterious manner (whether by pestilence or otherwise), was regarded by them as a providential, if not miraculous, interference on their behalf; and Jewish patriotism too easily beguiled

itself into a false confidence in the inviolability of Jerusalem. Probably the seventy-sixth Psalm is to be referred to this occasion :

In Judah God is known ; his name is great in Israel.
In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place
in Zion.

There hath He broken the arrows of the bow ; the
shield and the sword and the battle.

Thou (*Zion !*) art more glorious and excellent than
the mountains of plunderers.

The stout-hearted have been spoiled ; they have slept
their sleep ; and none of the men of might have
found their hands.

At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and
horse are cast into a dead sleep.

Thou, even thou, art terrible ; and who may stand in
thy sight when thou art angry ?

Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven ;
the earth feared and was still, when God arose to
judgment to save all the oppressed of the land.

Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee ; the re-
mainder of wrath thou wilt restrain.

Vow, and pay your vows to the Eternal your God ; all
ye who are around Him, bring presents to Him who
is to be feared.

He cutteth off the spirit of princes ; He is terrible to
the kings of the earth.

Certainly a false confidence *was* indulged, which called for this stern rebuke from Jeremiah : "Trust not in lying words, saying: The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah are these." "Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place." (Jer. vii. 3, 4.)

The prophets of this period are Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Obadiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, besides others not mentioned by name, who in the reign of Manasseh are collectively reported to have spoken thus :

Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, who were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols ; therefore, thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel :

Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab ; and I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hands of their enemies ; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies, because they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, from the day that their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day." (2 Kings xxi. 11—15.)

This brief history gives the true key-note to the prophecies which follow. They threaten captivity more and more clearly, and promise restoration. The reigns of the remaining kings of Judah may be usefully inserted here, with their dates (the Assyrian Captivity was 722) :

Hezekiah	b.c. 728	Jeconiah or Jehoiachin
Manasseh (son)	699	(son) b.c. 600
Amon (son)	644	Zedekiah or Mattaniah (son
Josiah (son)	642	of Josiah) 600
Jehoahaz or Shallum (son)	611	Babylonish Captivity and
Jehoiakim or Eliakim (bro-		end of the kingdom ... 588
ther)	611	

ZEPHANIAH prophesied in Josiah's reign. In his first two chapters he bewails and denounces the wickedness and idolatry of the land, and sees approaching judgment. In the third, woes are pronounced against Jerusalem ; and yet with the accompanying expectation of deliverance and prosperity for the nation in its own land. Here is the only approach to the Messianic idea ; and it may be taken as expressive of the hope that the Assyrian captives may return to a united monarchy. (Zeph. iii. 8, 9.)

Therefore wait ye for me, saith the Eternal, until the day that I rise up to the prey ; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger ; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

For then will I give to the peoples in exchange a clean lip, that they may all call upon the name of the Eternal to serve Him with one consent.

* * * * *

(14—end.) Sing, O daughter of Zion ; shout, O Israel ; be glad and rejoice with all thine heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

The Eternal hath taken away the judgments against thee ; He hath turned aside thine enemy. The king of Israel, even the Eternal, is in the midst of thee ; thou shalt not see evil any more.

In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem : Fear not ; to Zion : Let not thine hands be relaxed. The Eternal, thy God, in the midst of thee is mighty ; He will save ; He will rejoice over thee with joy ; He will renew thee in his love ; He will joy over thee with singing.

Those that are grieving far from the solemn assembly

I will gather together. The reproach of it was a burden.

Behold, at that time I will deal with all that afflict thee ; and I will save her that halteth, and gather in her that was driven out ; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.

At that time will I bring you back, and at that time will I gather you in. For I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I bring home your captivity before your eyes, saith the Eternal.

HABAKKUK, who alludes distinctly to the growing power of the Chaldeans, probably wrote in the time of Jehoiakim. One of the most poetical, graphic and (to a certain extent) dramatic of the Hebrew prophets, he has nothing that concerns our present inquiry. He looks at this rising dominion with religious awe, but with simple trust in God. He does not even hint that it may be destined to destroy the tottering kingdom of Judah.

OBADIAH has a vision against Edom, written perhaps after the first deportation of Judahite captives with their king Jeconiah ; which may have been the occasion in reference to which the prophet reproaches the Edomites for having "rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction." Obadiah has nothing *Messianic*.

JEREMIAH, the son of a priest, prophesied from the thirteenth year of Josiah to the beginning of the Babylonish captivity, that is, full forty years. Probably his first six chapters belong to the time of Josiah. Some other parts are distinctly dated in the later reigns of Jehoiakim and

Zedekiah. But the whole book is put together without regard to the order of events or of its composition. It requires re-arranging; and Dr. Blayney, in his translation, has attempted the task.

This prophet, in the early part of his mission, distinctly announces the coming invasion from the North; and in the later part speaks of the king of Babylon by name as the destined conqueror; he fixes the duration of the captivity of the Jews at seventy years (xxv. 11 and xxix. 10); and also predicts that at the end of that time Babylon will be destroyed by the Medes (li. 11), and the Jewish people be restored to their own land. It is in this connection that his *Messianic* hints occur. Passing by his earlier prophecy in Josiah's reign (iii.—vi.), in which he seems, like Zephaniah, to hope for the speedy return of the Israelitish captives from Assyria, and the preservation of Judah through timely repentance and obedience, we find the following patriotic, if not Messianic, passages.

In xvi. 14, 15, after predicting captivity, the prophet promises with equal distinctness the restoration to their land:

Yet behold, the days shall come, saith Jehovah, when men shall no more say, As Jehovah liveth who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, As Jehovah liveth who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the North, and from all the lands whither He had driven them.

For I will bring them again into their own land which I gave unto their fathers.

In xxiii. 5—8, there is the same promise in connection with a “righteous Branch” of David's family:

Behold the days are coming, saith the Eternal, when I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a

king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the land.

In his days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely.

And this is the name whereby he shall be called :
JEHOVAH-IS-OUR-RIGHTEOUSNESS.

In xxxiii. 14—18, the same is almost verbally repeated, with this addition (ver. 17, 18) :

For thus saith the Eternal : David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel ; neither shall the priests the levites want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to kindle meal-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.

The restored Judaism is not here described as about to be more spiritual than the old. But the most express prediction of the Return is made in ch. xxxi. (verses 11—30) ; and followed by these words of higher tone, which are appropriated to the Christian dispensation in the Epistle to the Hebrews (viii. 8—) :

Behold the days are coming, saith the Eternal, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah ; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which covenant with me they brake, and I rejected them, saith the Eternal) ;

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Eternal : I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts ; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the

Eternal ; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Eternal ; for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more.

Thus saith the Eternal, who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar,—JEHOVAH OF HOSTS is his name,—

If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Eternal, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

Thus saith the Eternal : If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done, saith the Eternal.

(xxxi. 31—37.)

In the prophecy of the destruction of Babylon (l. and li.), the return of the Jews, of both Judah and Israel, to their land is promised in almost prosaic language, without admixture of *Messianic* imagery :

Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria. And I will bring Israel again to his pasture, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and shall satisfy himself upon Mount Ephraim and Gilead. In those days and at that time, saith the Eternal, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none ; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found ; for I will pardon those whom I cause to be left.

(l. 18—20.)

In this way the prophetic imagery fluctuates between the spiritual and the merely national and temporal.

In the book of Lamentations, which Jeremiah seems to have written in Egypt soon after the ruin of his country (its subject being a lament over the fall of Jerusalem and the captivity of its inhabitants), the hope of the Return is but feebly breathed amid the most poignant expressions of humiliation and distress. Patriotic grief and shame seem to absorb every other feeling except that of religious resignation. The Messianic thought is forgotten for a while, even by him who had predicted the return from captivity.

EZEKIEL was one of the captives carried into Mesopotamia with king Jeconiah, by Nebuchadnezzar, twelve years before the total capture of Jerusalem. In his exile he denounces the coming woe of the holy city ; and after it is fulfilled, he still exhorts to duty, and promises the return of the people to their own land. But his pictures of the anticipated return are far less *Messianic* (in any spiritual sense of the word) than many that have been already quoted from other prophets. "In the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten," he sees a vision of restored Jerusalem, which is simply gigantic in size and impossible of literal conception (yet all appears to be meant literally), and was of course never realized in fact. His highest national and religious vision is in ch. xxxvii. 15—28, in which (after a vision of dry bones re-clothed with life) he, like other prophets, anticipates the re-union of the two kingdoms under a descendant of David, and the perpetuity of restored Judaism :

The word of the Eternal came unto me, saying :
Son of Man, take thee one stick and write upon it,
For Judah and for the children of Israel, his compa-
nions ; then take another stick and write upon it, For
Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of

Israel, his companions. Then join them one to another into one stick, and they shall become one in thine hand.

And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these? say unto them: Thus saith the Lord, the Eternal: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And let the sticks whereon thou writest be in thine hand before their eyes, and say unto them:

Thus saith the Lord, the Eternal: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them; so that they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

And David my servant shall be king over them, and they all shall have one shepherd. They shall also walk in my judgments and observe my statutes, and do them.

And they shall dwell in the land which I gave unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children,

and their children's children, for ever ; and my servant David shall be their prince for ever.

Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them ; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them ; and I will place them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them ; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And the nations shall know that I, the Eternal, do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.

Thus there is little progress in the Messianic idea traceable in Ezekiel, unless it be in the high and anti-ceremonial morality which breathes through his pages (of which the well-known thirty-third chapter is perhaps the most striking example). The patriotic hope of the re-union of the two kingdoms on their return from captivity was breathed in vain.

DANIEL was one of the captives on the taking of Jerusalem, being then a boy. He seems to have lived through the captivity to the Return. But critical reasons decide that the *book* of Daniel is of much later authorship ; and the one allusion which it contains (Dan. ix. 25, 26)—so remarkable in terms, yet so obscure in its description of events—to “Messiah the Prince,” belongs therefore to the later developement of this national belief.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY.

(B.C. 588—536.)

WE know little about the Jews in their captivity except from its results. The Bible history stops short at that point, as if in national grief and humiliation, to resume its course for a little while on the Return of the nation to their own land.

But we judge, from various salient facts, that the captivity in Babylon was not cruelly oppressive, beyond what is necessarily implied in exile from the native land. Jews rose readily into offices of honour and trust in the kingdom of their conquerors, as Daniel in the Babylonian period, and Queen Esther, Mordecai and Nehemiah, in the Persian which followed. The fact, too, that by no means the whole Jewish population returned when freely permitted to do so by the decree of Cyrus, bears the same construction, while also shewing that the lapse of seventy years had produced its natural results upon the new generation born during the captivity. Few remained of the original exiles; and most of those who had been born in Babylon were content to live there still in quiet prosperity or comfort.

But the most important aspect of this event is its influence upon the character of Judaism and of the Jews thenceforth. I adopt the words of a recent able writer:

"On one question all competent historians and commentators are agreed : viz. that the Jews gained immensely in the clearness and compass of their religious faith during the captivity. The captivity, which was the punishment, was also the limit, of their idolatry : into that sin they never afterwards fell. Now first, they began to understand that the bond of their unity was not local, not national even, but spiritual and religious : they were spread over every province of a foreign empire, yet they were one people and a sacred people in virtue of their common service of Jehovah, and their common hope of Messiah's coming. This hope had been vaguely felt before ; and just previous to the captivity, Isaiah had arrayed it in an unrivalled splendour of imagery : now it sunk into the popular mind, and became a deep longing of the national heart. From this period, moreover, the immortality of the soul and the life beyond death entered distinctly and prominently into the Hebrew creed. Always latent in their Scriptures, these truths disclosed themselves to the Jews as they came in contact with the Persian doctrines of judgment and future rewards. Hitherto they had thought mainly, if not exclusively, of the temporal rewards and punishments by which the Mosaic Law encouraged the good and threatened the wicked : henceforth they saw that in time and on earth human actions are not carried to their final and due results ; they looked forward to a judgment in which all wrongs should be righted, all unpunished evils receive their recompence, and all the sufferings of the good be exchanged for endless joy and peace."*

The same author says (p. 268, note) : "Roughly speaking, I believe the Jews owe their literary advance to contact with the inquisitive and learned Babylonians, and their religious advance to contact with the pure faith of the primitive Persians." And he thinks "it was similarity of creed that won their favour for the Hebrew captives" in the decree of Cyrus.

* The Quest of the Chief Good : Expository Lectures on the Book of Ecclesiastes, with a new Translation, by Samuel Cox (pp. 63, 64).

Our special business is with the progress of the Messianic thought during this period. And the fact simply is this: that it was generally quiescent during the captivity, and at the end of that period was generally ready to anticipate the temporal restoration; but under the influence of one prophet especially—the Isaiah of the Return—it burst forth into the highest national and religious hopes ever hitherto expressed.

We trace the Messianic thought of this period chiefly by the aid of those Psalms which appear, on fair critical grounds, to have been composed during it; and by the aid, most especially, of the later prophet Isaiah, who sang the hopes of the returning captives, and no doubt accompanied their return to the land of their fathers.

The more remarkable Psalms belonging to the period shall first be cited. There is no need to transcribe the whole number, nor any of doubtful date.*

Ps. lxix. is one of these, if not originally, at least by subsequent adaptation. It is a psalm of distress, ascribed, in the common title, to David, and perhaps written by him, except the concluding part, which is adapted to the times of the captivity. No doubt the psalm originally ended thus (verses 32—34):

The humble shall see this and be glad; let your heart
rejoice, ye that seek after God.

For Jehovah heareth the poor, and despiseth not his
prisoners.

Let heaven and earth praise Him; the sea and all that
moveth therein.

* In the very interesting book called "The Psalms chronologically arranged, by Four Friends," those assigned to the period from the destruction of the kingdom to the return from exile, include many that seem equally appropriate to other periods, and are generally regarded as earlier.

To which were added verses 35, 36, by a poet of the captivity :

For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah ; that they may dwell there and have it in possession.

The seed also of his servants shall inherit it, and they that love his name shall dwell therein.

Probably Psalm lxxxix. belongs to the captivity. It recounts the promises of God to David his Anointed (*Messiah*), that "his seed should be for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven;" and it bewails the existing misery of his descendants, ending thus plaintively :

Lord, where are thy former loving-kindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth ?

Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants, which I bear in my bosom from many peoples,
Wherewith thine enemies reproach thee, O Jehovah ;
wherewith they reproach the footsteps of thine Anointed ;—

where the term Anointed—*Messiah*—seems to denote the nation at large, rather than the royal house or personage alone.

Psalms lxxiii. and lxxvii. are in the same tone of plaintive regret and but half-reviving hope.

In xciv. is a harsher cry for vengeance mixed with religious trust.

In liii. (which is a repetition of xiv. with little alteration) the Psalmist reproves the atheistic impiety of the heathen oppressors of his nation, and anticipates the Return :

The fool saith in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and are become abominable in their doings ; there is none that doeth good.

Jehovah looketh down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there be any that do understand and seek after God.

But they are all gone out of the way, they are all corrupt together; there is none that doeth good; no, not one.

Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not on Jehovah.

Then shall they greatly fear who did not fear; when God shall scatter the bones of the profane; they shall be put to shame, for God despiseth them.

O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captives of his people, Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall be glad.

Psalm lxxix. bewails the desolation of Jerusalem:

O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple they have defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps.

It is ascribed by some to Jeremiah, having several expressions that are found in his prophecies. It ends thus:

O remember not against us former iniquities; let thy tender mercies speedily succour us, for we are brought very low.

Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; and deliver us, and pardon our sins, for thy name's sake!

Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God? Let the avenging of the blood of thy servants which hath been shed, be known among the heathen in our sight. Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power,

preserve thou those that are condemned to die ; and render unto our neighbours seven-fold into their bosom their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O Jehovah !

So we, thy people and the sheep of thy pasture, will give thee thanks for ever ; we will shew forth thy praise to all generations.

Psalms xxv. xxxiv. and xxxvii. are quite appropriate to the same period ; and their artificial structure as *alphabetical* psalms (the lines beginning with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in succession) marks them as belonging to a date not earlier than that of the captivity. The twenty-fifth ends with the prayer, “ Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.”

Psalm lxxxii. grandly asserts the supremacy of Jehovah over all the rulers of the earth :

God standeth in the assembly of the mighty ; He judgeth among the gods ; saying,

“ How long will ye judge unjustly, and favour the cause of the wicked ?

Defend the poor and fatherless, do justice to the afflicted and needy ; deliver the poor and needy ; rid them out of the hand of the wicked.”

They know not, neither will they understand ; they walk in darkness ; all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

I said, Ye are gods, and all of you children of the Most High ; but ye shall die like common men and fall like one of the poor.

Arise, O God ; judge thou the earth ; for all nations are thy possession.

Psalm cii. must be, in all fairness, referred to the concluding part of the captivity, when the writer is confident

that the “time to favour Zion, yea, the set time, is come.” The intire Psalm, spoken in the name of the Jewish nation, is most expressive of the strong trust in their promised restoration. After a plaintive picture of national sorrow, it pursues (ver. 12—):

But thou, O Jehovah, endurest for ever, and thy remembrance shall be to all generations.
Thou wilt arise and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come;
For thy servants take pleasure even in her stones; and it pitith them to see her in the dust.
So shall the heathen fear the name of Jehovah, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.
When Jehovah shall build up Zion, He shall appear in his glory.
He will regard the prayer of the afflicted, and not despise their prayer.
This shall be written for the generation to come (and let the people that shall be born praise Jehovah):
That He hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did Jehovah behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to release those that were appointed to death:
That they may declare the name of Jehovah in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem, when the nations are gathered together and the kingdoms to serve Jehovah.
He weakened my strength in the way; He shortened my days. Then I said: O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days; thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a

garment ; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

Here must be cited two, if not three, passages from the book of Isaiah, which predict the fall of Babylon under the growing power of the Medes, and the restoration of the Jews to their own land. These are referred by critics to a much later prophet than the Isaiah of king Hezekiah's time; and this later prophet may probably have been the same who wrote the second part of the book of Isaiah (from ch. xl to the end), and who is known as the second or younger Isaiah, a contemporary and partaker of the latter part of the exile and of the return.

The first of these passages is called "the Oracle (or Prophecy) concerning Babylon." (Is. xiii.—xiv. 23.) It probably belongs to the time of Belshazzar, when Babylon was conquered by Darius (Cyaxares) the Mede. (Dan. v. 30.) It is one of the finest passages of Hebrew poetry, especially in the bold personification which makes the shades of deceased monarchs rouse themselves to exult over the king of Babylon on his "becoming one of them."

Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain ; exalt the voice unto them ; wave the hand, that they may enter the gates of the nobles.

I have given orders to my appointed ones ; I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, my [soldiers] proudly exulting !

The noise of a multitude is on the mountains, as of a great people ! a tumultuous noise of nations, of kingdoms gathered together ! Jehovah of hosts mustereth the host for the battle ! They come from a far

country, from the end of heaven, Jehovah and the instruments of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

Howl ye! for the day of Jehovah is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt, and they shall be terrified; pangs and throes shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth; they shall look upon one another with amazement; their faces shall be as flames.

Behold, the day of Jehovah cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

Yea, the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened at his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. For I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold, yea a man than the gold of Ophir.

Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall be moved out of her place, in the wrath of Jehovah of hosts and in the day of his fierce anger; and it shall be that, as the chased roe and as a sheep that no man taketh up, they shall every man turn to his own people and flee every one into his own land. Every one that is found shall be thrust through, and every one that is caught shall fall by the sword. Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled and their wives ravished.

Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, who shall not regard silver ; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also will dash the young men to pieces, and they will have no pity on the fruit of the womb ; their eye will not spare children.

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah : it shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation ; neither shall the Arab pitch his tent there, nor shall shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there ; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures ; and ostriches shall dwell there, and shaggy creatures shall dance there ; and howling beasts shall cry in their desolate houses, and jackals in their pleasant palaces. Her time is near, and her days shall not be prolonged.

For Jehovah will have mercy on Jacob, and will again choose Israel, and give them rest in their own land ; and strangers shall be joined with them and cleave to the house of Jacob. And the nations shall take them and bring them to their own place ; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and handmaids ; and they shall take them captive whose captives they were, and they shall rule over their oppressors.

And it shall come to pass, in the day when Jehovah shall give thee rest from thy sorrow and from thy fear and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve, that thou shalt take up this song against the king of Babylon, and say :

How hath the oppressor ceased ! the gold-exacting city
ceased !

Jehovah hath broken the staff of the wicked, the sceptre
of the rulers, who smote the people in wrath with a
continual stroke, who ruled the nations in anger, who
persecuted and none hindered.

The whole earth is at rest and is quiet.—They break
forth into singing ; yea, the fir-trees rejoice over
thee, the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since thou art
laid down, no one is come up against us to fell us.

Hades from beneath is moved because of thee, to meet
thee at thy coming. It stirreth up the dead for thee,
all the chief ones of the earth. It raiseth up from
their thrones all the kings of the nations. They all
shall speak and say unto thee :

Art thou also become weak as we ! Art thou become
like unto us ! Thy pomp is brought down to the
grave, and the noise of thy viols ; the worm is spread
under thee and worms cover thee ! How art thou
fallen from heaven, O Day-star, Son of the Morning !
how art thou cut down to the ground, that didst
subdue the nations !

And thou hadst said in thine heart, I will ascend into
the heavens ; I will exalt my throne above the stars
of God ; I will also sit upon the mount of assembly
in the extremities of the north ; I will ascend above
the heights of the clouds ; I will be like the Most
High.

But thou shalt be brought down to the grave, to the
depths of the pit. They that see thee shall gaze at
thee, and consider thee, saying : “ Is this the man
that made the earth to tremble ; that did shake
kingdoms ; that made the world as a wilderness,

and destroyed its cities, and released not his prisoners?"

All the kings of the nations, all of them, lie in honour, every one in his own sepulchre; but thou art cast forth without a grave, like a worthless branch, covered with the slain that are thrust through with the sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under foot. Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy country and slain thy people. The seed of evil-doers shall never be renowned.

Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers, that they may no more arise and possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities. For I will rise up against them, saith Jehovah of hosts, and cut off from Babylon name and remnant, son and grandson, saith Jehovah. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith Jehovah of hosts.*

The next oracle, probably by the same prophet, belongs, apparently, to the same date. It is Is. xxi. 1—10; a much shorter prophecy on the same subject. It is intitled, "The oracle (or prophecy) concerning the desert of the sea" (the country about and below Babylon being a morass, often overflowed by the waters of the Tigris and the Euphrates).

As whirlwinds in the south rush along, so he cometh from the desert, from a terrible land.

A grievous vision is revealed to me: "The spoiler spoileth, the destroyer destroyeth.

* The following verses (xiv. 24—28) go back to the Assyrian times, and no doubt belong to the older Isaiah. They would naturally follow the twelfth chapter.

Go up, O Elam ! besiege, O Media ! all sighing about it have I made to cease."

Therefore are my loins filled with pain ; pangs have taken hold of me, as the pangs of a woman that travaleth ; I was bowed down so that I could not hear ; I was dismayed so that I could not see. My heart panted ; terrors affrighted me ; the night which I desired hath he turned into horror.

The table is prepared ; the watch is set ; they eat and drink. Arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield. For thus said the Lord unto me : Go, set a watchman ; let him declare what he seeth.

And he saw chariots, horsemen in pairs, riders on asses, riders on camels ; and he watched diligently with much heed.

Then he cried out like a lion : My lord, I stand continually upon the watch-tower in the day-time, and I keep my post all night. And behold here cometh a man in a chariot with a couple of horsemen, and he answereth and saith : Babylon is fallen, is fallen ; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.

Oh my crushed people, child of my threshing-floor ! that which I have heard from Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.

The third oracle ascribed to the Isaiah of the captivity is more elaborate. It runs through chapters xxiv.—xxvii. inclusive, giving a pathetic description (xxiv. 1—20) of the desolation of the land of Judah, and the promise of return. But it is quite possible to interpret this prophecy as spoken by the earlier Isaiah in the days of the Assyrian invasion ; and the mention of Assyria and Egypt near the end of ch. xxvii. favours this view. In any case (as already observed,

p. 68), its promise of restoration is secular rather than Messianic. We may therefore be satisfied to refer to it without transcribing it.

A very remarkable series of Psalms belongs to the end of the captivity, the departure from Babylon and the re-entrance into the father-land. These are the fifteen from cxx. to cxxxiv. inclusive, which are oddly intitled in the common version, *Songs of Degrees*. The Hebrew title might be translated literally, Songs of the *Going-up*, or perhaps of the *Return*. *Pilgrim Odes* has been suggested as a term which would describe them well. Some of them may probably be, originally, of older date than the Return, and may have been *adapted* to that occasion and named accordingly. They are songs of mixed sadness and hope; but the joyous feeling largely predominates and continually grows. They have manifestly been collected together without much regard to the order of their composition or use; but the more strongly marked of them will help us to something like the order of the events and thoughts which they severally record. And these psalms will appropriately introduce the great poet of the Return, the younger Isaiah, and his less distinguished but highly illustrative contemporaries Haggai and Zechariah. These various poets, with one or two later psalmists, fill up with vivid life the meagre outline of the history given in the first six chapters of the book of Ezra.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RETURN OF THE EXILES.

(B.C. 536.)

CYRUS, on his accession to the throne of the Persian empire, B.C. 536, proclaimed liberty to all Jews in his dominions to return to their land and rebuild the temple at Jerusalem. Whether this was matter of policy, generosity or religious sympathy, is debatable. Judahites, Benjamites and Levites, descendants of Nebuchadnezzar's captives, accepted the opportunity; but no descendants of the Ten tribes (who had been carried away earlier by the Assyrians) are recorded as among the number, though equally included in the royal proclamation. Apparently they were already lost as a distinct race. And no wonder, after nearly two hundred years' dispersion!

Prince Zerubbabel (also called Sheshbazzar), the representative of the royal line of David (with Jeshua, or Joshua, the high-priest), headed the expedition, which amounted to about 50,000 persons. They soon set up an altar at Jerusalem and offered sacrifices; and, having accumulated building materials, laid the foundation of a new temple in the second year of their return. But the Samaritan population of the land shewed themselves hostile, and hindered the work for some time during the reign of Cambyses, the son and successor of Cyrus (called Artaxerxes by Ezra). Under Darius Hystaspis (B.C. 522) the work was again favoured, and the temple presently completed and dedicated.

Haggai and Zechariah prophesied among the returned exiles, encouraging and exhorting to the work. (Read Ezra i.—vi. inclusive.)

Ezra, a priest and scribe, headed a second detachment of Jews, nearly eighty years after the first, in the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, B.C. 457; and the rest of the book of Ezra (vii.—x.) relates to his administration of affairs.

A third company of exiles returned under Nehemiah, this king's cup-bearer, B.C. 446, and fortified Jerusalem with walls, notwithstanding the continued opposition of the Samaritans. The prophet Malachi seems to belong to that date.

From these few facts,—the small number of the first returning patriots, and the long interval before the second and third detachments,—and from the depressed tone of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, it is plain that the results of the return were sadly disappointing to the religious hopes of the nation. But their contemporary prophets and psalmists better enable us to enter into the earnest and devoted spirit of the pilgrim colonists themselves. Their toilsome journey through the intervening desert country, which is passed over in silence by the historian, is pictured to us in the recorded songs with which it was cheered and encouraged; and the hindrances of their pious work are presented in other songs of the series. Here, then, are these *Songs of Degrees*, the “Pilgrim Odes” of the Jews returning to their own land, arranged in the probable, or at least the possible, order of their production or use by the exiles.

(*While still in Babylon, the exiles are looking devoutly for their deliverance.*)

[Ps. cxxiii.]

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in
the heavens!

Behold, even as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress ; even so our eyes wait upon Jehovah our God, until that He have mercy upon us.

Have mercy upon us, O Jehovah, have mercy upon us, for we are utterly despised ; our soul is filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.

[Ps. cxxx.]

Out of the depths I cry to thee, O Jehovah ; Jehovah, hear my voice ; let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

If thou, Jehovah, shouldst mark iniquities, O Jehovah, who could stand ? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be revered.

I wait for Jehovah ; my soul doth wait ; and in his word do I hope. My soul waiteth for Jehovah, more than watchmen for the morning, yea, than watchmen for the morning.

Let Israel hope in Jehovah ; for with Jehovah there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

(But the spirit of the Psalmist is submissive and patient.)

[Ps. cxxxii.]

O Jehovah, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty ; neither do I exercise myself in great matters or in things too high for me. But I refrain my soul and keep it still, as a weaned child towards his mother ; my soul is even as a weaned child.

O Israel, trust in Jehovah, from this time forth for evermore.

(*Mount Zion is to them the emblem of perpetuity for the nation.*)

[Ps. cxxv.]

They that trust in Jehovah shall be as Mount Zion,
which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.

As the hills stand round about Jerusalem, even so
standeth Jehovah round about his people, from this
time forth for evermore.

For the sceptre of the ungodly shall not remain upon
the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth
their hands unto wickedness.

Do good, O Jehovah, unto those that are good, and to
them that are upright in their hearts. As for such
as turn aside unto their crooked ways, Jehovah will
drive them forth with the evil-doers.

Peace be upon Israel !

(*To a devout exile about to depart, the little psalm of David next following, if rightly ascribed to David, which celebrates the ancient visits of the tribes to Jerusalem at their annual feasts, naturally occurs as more solemnly appropriate to this greater and more special pilgrimage. Or perhaps—as has been prettily imagined—it may have been “the utterance of an aged exile, himself unequal to a journey across the desert,” but who gives his farewell blessing on a party of younger pilgrims, as their departure reminds him of former days, and their religious enthusiasm inspires him to pour forth the praises of Jerusalem of old.—See “Psalms chronologically arranged.”*)

[Ps. cxxii.]

I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go into the
house of Jehovah.”

Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem,—
Jerusalem that art built as a city that is compact in

itself; thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of Jehovah, according to an ordinance for Israel, to praise the name of Jehovah: for there is the seat of judgment, even the seat of the house of David!

O pray for the peace of Jerusalem! May they prosper that love thee! Peace be within thy walls! Prosperity within thy palaces! For my brethren and companions' sake, I will now say, Peace be within thee! For the sake of the house of Jehovah our God, I will seek to do thee good.

(Are not the exiles on their journey, suffering its toils and dangers, and now straining their eyes westward for the first sight of the hills of Palestine, when their poet sings the following psalm?)

[Ps. cxxi.]

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from Jehovah who made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel neither slumbereth nor sleepeth.

Jehovah is thy keeper; Jehovah is thy shade on thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night: Jehovah will preserve thee from all evil; He will keep thy life.

Jehovah will preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth and for evermore.

(And what more natural, on one of their halts in the desert, than for the poet of the Return to reflect thus upon their recent experience, and to express his hope for the return of the remaining captives?)

[Ps. cxxvi.]

When Jehovah turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. Then said they among the heathen, "Jehovah hath done great things for them."

Jehovah hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.

Turn again our captivity, O Jehovah, as the streams in the south.* They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come back with joy, bringing his sheaves.

(Many times, both on the journey through the desert and during the opposition of the Samaritans when they had reached their land, they may have had occasion to sing the words of this psalm, ascribed to David:)

[Ps. cxxiv.]

If Jehovah himself had not been on our side (now may Israel say),—if Jehovah himself had not been on our side when men rose up against us, then had they swallowed us up alive when their wrath was kindled against us; then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul; then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

Blessed be Jehovah, who hath not given us a prey to their teeth! Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler; the snare is broken and we are escaped.

Our help standeth in the name of Jehovah, who made heaven and earth.

* As they are filled again after the drought of summer.

*(And in other psalms, probably written on such occasions,
there is the same general feeling :)*

[Ps. cxx.]

In my distress I call upon Jehovah, and He heareth me: “Deliver my soul, O Jehovah, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue.”

What shall He give or do unto thee, thou false tongue, who art like the sharp arrows of the mighty and hot burning coals?

Alas for me, that I sojourn in Meshech,* that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!* Too long have I dwelt with them that hate peace. I am for peace; but when I speak of it, they are for war.

[Ps. cxxix.]

Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth (may Israel now say),—many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; yet they have not prevailed against me.

The ploughers ploughed upon my back, and made long furrows; but Jehovah is righteous; He hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.

Let them all be confounded and turned back, that hate Zion! Let them be as the grass upon the house-tops, which withereth before it is grown up; wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom! Neither do they who go by say, “The blessing of Jehovah be upon you; we bless you in the name of Jehovah.”

(But they have now begun their building work in earnest, and implore upon it the renewed blessing of Him who blest the earlier work of David in establishing the tabernacle worship

* Barbarous tribes north and south, to whom the Samaritans perhaps are compared by the poet.

on Mount Zion. The next psalm is commonly ascribed to Solomon or some poet of his day, and thought to have been adopted by Zerubbabel on occasion of his founding, or else finishing, the second temple.)

[Ps. cxxxii.]

Jehovah! remember David and all his trouble; how he sware unto Jehovah and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob: "Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of mine house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eyelids, until I have found a place for Jehovah, a habitation for the Mighty One of Jacob."

Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah, we found it in the fields of the forest.

We will go into His tabernacles; we will worship at His footstool.

Arise, O Jehovah, into thy resting-place; thou and the ark of thy strength!

Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints shout for joy.

For thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of thine Anointed. Jehovah hath made a faithful oath unto David, and He will not turn from it: "Of the fruit of thy body I will set one on thy throne; if thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony which I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore."

For Jehovah hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for his habitation (saying):

"This shall be my resting-place for ever; here will I dwell; for I have a delight therein. I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread; I will also clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

There will I make the horn of David to shoot forth ;
I will ordain a lamp for mine Anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame, but upon himself shall his crown flourish."

(Psalm cxxvii., ascribed to Solomon in the title, comes back to their minds most naturally during the progress, and amid the delays, of their work in raising the second temple.)

[Ps. cxxvii.]

Except Jehovah build the house, they labour in vain
that build it ; except Jehovah keep the city, the
watchman waketh but in vain. In vain ye rise up
early and sit up late, and eat the bread of care.
Truly He giveth to his beloved sleep.

Lo ! children are a heritage from Jehovah ! and the
fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in
the hand of a mighty man, even so are the sons of
our youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver
full of them ; they shall not be ashamed when they
plead with their enemies in the gate.

*(Psalms cxxviii. and cxxxiii. begin to realize, like the last,
the social and family blessings of the restoration to their
own land.)*

[Ps. cxxviii.]

Blessed is every one that feareth Jehovah ; that walk-
eth in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of
thine hands ; happy shalt thou be, and it shall be
well with thee.

Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of
thine house ; thy children like olive plants round
about thy table. Behold, thus shall the man be
blessed that feareth Jehovah.

Jehovah from out of Zion shall so bless thee, that thou

shalt see Jerusalem in prosperity all thy life long.
Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.

[Ps. cxxxiii.]

Behold! how good and pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aarón's beard; that flowed down on the collar of his garment;—as the dew of Hermon, as that which descendeth on the mountains of Zion.

For there Jehovah commandeth his blessing, even life for evermore.

(*And cxxxiv. seems to represent the words of the people addressed to the priest, and the reply of the latter*):

[Ps. cxxxiv.]

[*People.*] Behold! bless ye Jehovah, all ye servants of Jehovah; ye who stand by night in the house of Jehovah. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise Jehovah.

[*Priest.*] Jehovah, that made heaven and earth, bless thee out of Zion!

These are the fifteen *Psalms of Degrees*, or Pilgrim “*Songs in Going-up*” to Jerusalem from Babylon.

Ps. cxxxvii. must be quoted also here, as evidently belonging to this period. It is plaintive and pensive in its first six verses, and sadly vengeful in the last three, which are historically illustrative, however, of the feeling excited in the minds of the returning captives towards their conquerors, and also towards the Edomites (their national kindred) who had rejoiced over their fall. (The intervening psalms, cxxxv. and cxxxvi., probably belong to the same period of re-establishment in the land.)

[Ps. cxxxvii.]

By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. We hung our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they who had carried us away captives required of us a song ; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion."

How can we sing a song of Jehovah in a foreign land ? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning ! If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth ! if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy !

O Jehovah, remember the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem, how they said, Raze it, raze it to the foundation thereof !

O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed ! Happy he who requiteth thee as thou hast served us ! Happy he that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones !

And one psalm more, belonging apparently to the period of the settlement in the land, but while the settlers were perplexed and troubled in their work, may be quoted with intire approval, sympathy and admiration. It is

[Ps. lxxxv.]

O Jehovah, thou art become gracious unto thy land ; thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob. Thou hast forgiven the offence of thy people, and hast covered all their sins. Thou hast taken away all thy displeasure, and turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger.

Turn to us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger towards us to cease. Wilt thou be angry with us for ever ? and wilt thou stretch out thy wrath

from one generation to another? Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee? Shew us thy mercy, O Jehovah, and grant us thy salvation.

I will hearken what Jehovah our God will say; for He will speak peace unto his people and to his saints; but let them not turn again to folly. Truly his salvation is nigh them that fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring up out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Yea, Jehovah will give that which is good, and our land shall yield her increase. Righteousness shall go before Him and tread firmly on the way.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ISAIAH OF THE RETURN.

CONTEMPORARY with the Psalmists of the Return is the Prophet Isaiah the younger (or whatever may have been his name), the author of the concluding chapters of the book of Isaiah from the fortieth to the end.

He may possibly have also written (as already suggested) two or three other passages in the earlier part of the book. These later chapters, now opening before us, form an almost continuous stream of earnest religious joy, hope and zeal ; yet mixed with sadness, remonstrance and reproof to those careless and indifferent Jews, whom neither religious zeal nor patriotism could move. They must have been written by one who accompanied, or rather led and encouraged, the expedition homewards. The difficulty of effecting the restoration, and the immediate disappointment of the more sanguine Jewish hope, are indeed nowhere more legible than in this very book, which expresses the most buoyant hopes of the returning exiles. It is not improbable that these prophecies may have been spoken at intervals through a series of years.

The reproduction of these poems in full, in their proper place in the Jewish history, is the central business of this volume. This new Isaiah represents the Messianic Jewish belief in its fullest bloom. In him the idea culminates ; under him it hopes and strives for immediate realization ; under him it again suffers disappointment, but not decline.

To this point all that has been traced in the earlier Scriptures converges; and from this point onwards again we have to trace the history of temporal disappointment and of more spiritual hopes during succeeding centuries; of mixed doubt and belief when the Messiah of Christian acceptance actually came; of lingering futile Jewish hope thenceforth; the expectation of the end of the world in the apostolic and early Christian ages; of the millennium next; and more modern enthusiasms since. In this history Christianity is linked with Judaism, and many strange yet natural delusions with both. But this book of the second Isaiah abounds, above all, in the highest representations of the Divine attributes, worship and service, that are to be found in the Jewish Scriptures; and, in this point of view, it has a moral and devotional value almost unrivalled.

Of this unknown prophet, Dean Stanley, after paying his tribute of honour to Jeremiah and Ezekiel, speaks in the following discriminative terms, shewing how the Jewish seer was abreast, if not in advance, of his own times, and tracing the grand course of Providence in the world at large in connection with his mission. The remarkable breadth of view with which this prophet is put in his place in universal history, demands the production of this long extract without abridgment.

"One other voice begins to make itself heard as Ezekiel's words die away—a 'voice'* rather than a living man—the last swan-like song of the Prophets of the monarchy—a voice sounding in the barren wilderness between the Captivity and the Return, between Babylon and Jerusalem. It is that wonderful strain, which by likeness of thought and language seems a continuation of the great Isaiah, by its connexion with the sufferings and the fall of the nation links itself to the fortunes of Jeremiah or of Baruch, and by its mysterious origin and inde-

* Is. xl. 3, 6.

pendent character well claims the title of the ‘Great Unnamed.’*

“Those six-and-twenty chapters of the book of Isaiah—the most deeply inspired, the most truly Evangelical of any portion of the Prophetic writings, whatever be their date and whoever their author—take their stand on the times of the Captivity, and from thence look forward from the summit of the last ridge of the Jewish history into the remotest future, unbroken now by any intervening barrier.

Both worlds at once they view,
Who stand upon the threshold of the new.

“The ‘warfare of Jerusalem is already accomplished.’† ‘She has received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.’‡ ‘The princes of the sanctuary are profaned.’ ‘The holy land is waste and desolate.’ ‘Zion is forsaken and forgotten.’§ ‘The holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a desolation, Jerusalem is a desolation.’ ‘The holy and beautiful house wherein their fathers had worshiped is burned up with fire, and all their pleasant things are laid waste.’|| This is the retrospect to which the Prophet looks back. The times not only of Manasseh, but of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, are far behind him. The exiles to whom he appeals are already planted in Babylon; to them, and not to any former generation of Israelites, is the consolation addressed, which streams in one continuous flow, uninterrupted by the multiplied incidents which, on the right hand and the left, had broken the course of the earlier Prophetic appeals. From this bondage of the Captivity a new Exodus is to begin for the Chosen People—a new return through the wilderness.

“But this revival of Isaiah’s spirit, this new epoch for Israel, is to coincide with a new epoch in the history of the world. The primeval period of mankind is drawing to its close; the ancient gigantic monarchies and religions, known to us only through their mighty conquerors or their vast monuments, are, as

* So Ewald. † Is. xl. 2. ‡ Ibid. xliii. 28.

§ Ibid. xliv. 26, 28, li. 3, lxii. 4, xlix. 14, 19, 21.

|| Ibid. lxiv. 10, 11, lii. 9; comp. ibid. 24, lii. 2.

we have seen, passing away ; the great catastrophe which is to wind up their long career, the fall of Babylon, is already imminent. And in the place of this giant age is to begin that second period of history, which we term classical. (CYRUS, B.C. 560.) Its commencement may be fixed almost to a year. It is with the clearest right that the first date of the 'Fasti Hellenici,' the Grecian annals of our English chronologer, is fixed in the year 560. It is the date of the accession of the two famous potentates in Greece and amongst the Grecian colonists, from whose reigns commences our distinct knowledge of Grecian life and literature :—Pisistratus at Athens, Croesus at Sardis. It is the date which coincides with the appearance of the first authentic characters of Roman history in the reign of the Tarquins. From this time forward that Western world of Greece and Rome rises more and more steadily above the horizon, till it occupies the whole view. It was a true insight into the inmost heart of this vast movement, which caused the Prophet to see in it not merely the blessing of his own people, but the union of the* distant isles of the Western Sea with the religion hitherto confined to the uplands of Asia. And further, in the East itself, the time was come when from beyond the northern mountains the power was to descend which should accomplish this vast catastrophe. To that power—not merely to the quarter of the world, or to the nation, or to the hour, but to the man—did the Prophetic indications of this period point, with a significance worthy of the grandeur of the occasion. One such had arisen—in that same year, the year 560, just twenty years after the Jewish exile had begun—Koresh or Cyrus, the Persian. On him the expectation of the nations was fixed. Concerning him the question rose whether he would, like the chiefs and princes of former times, be a mere transient conqueror? or would be indeed the deliverer who should inaugurate the fall of the old and the rise of the new world?

"Out of the darkness of suspense came the welcome answer which marked him out as the† One Anointed Hero,—alike of the

* Is. xlvi. 1, lx.9.

† Is. xlvi. 1.

Chosen People, and of all the nations of the then known world. Amply was that prophetic intimation justified. To us, looking back at the crisis from a distance which enables us to see the whole extent of the new era which he was to open, the fitness of Cyrus for the place which the Prophet assigns to him is full of meaning. The history of the civilized world was entering on an epoch, when the Semitic races were to make way for the Indo-Germanic or Aryan nations, which were henceforth to sway the fortunes of mankind. With those nations Cyrus, first of Asiatic potentates, was to be brought into close relation. With Greece henceforward the destinies of the Persian monarchy would be inseparably united. Nay, of all the nations of Central Asia, Persia alone was of the same stock as the Greco-Roman and Germanic world. Cyrus, first of the great men whom Scripture records, spoke the tongue, not of Palestine or Assyria, but of the races of the West. First, too, of the ancient conquerors, Cyrus is known to us as other than a mere despot and destroyer. It can hardly be without ground that he who, by the Hebrew Prophet, was hailed not merely as a liberator and benefactor of Israel, but as an inaugurator of a reign of Righteousness and Truth, should in Grecian* literature, alone of the barbarian kings, have been represented as the type of a just and gentle Prince. In contact also with Cyrus, the Israelite found, for the first time in the heathen world, not a temptation to idolatry, but a protection of that belief in the Unity of God, which now as never before began to take hold of the national mind. Of all the Gentile forms of faith, the religion of the Persians was the most simple and the most spiritual. Their abhorrence of idols† was pushed almost to fanaticism. In Egypt, the scattered statues and broken temples still bear witness to the furious zeal of Cambyses. In Greece, the approach of Xerxes to Delphi was the invasion not merely of a hostile army, but of a

* Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*.

† 'They have no images of the Gods, no temples, no altars, and consider the use of them a sign of folly.'—Herodotus, i. 131. Compare Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, Vol. I. Essay 5.

band of terrible iconoclasts. And so the advent of Cyrus was now hailed by the Prophet as the doom of the gigantic idols of Babylon which should totter* and fall before his approach : the bitter scorn with which the old Polytheism was assailed by the Israelite captives was strengthened by the corresponding scoffs which it awakened in the Persian conquerors.

"Such was the outward framework of the prospect which opened before the Prophet's mind. The prospect itself was vaster and wider still. It is the same as that of Ezekiel, but cleared almost intirely† from that material imagery of priestly ritual and stately sanctuary, of fierce war and sweeping conquest, with which Ezekiel's visions were so deeply tinged. It expands into the pure and bright anticipations of a reign of Love and Justice, which needs hardly any outward figure to represent‡ it. In the past, not the regal magnificence of David and Solomon, but the patriarchal simplicity of Abraham and the grand prophetic march of Moses,§ furnish the grounds of hope. In the foreground of the future stands not the Ruler or Conqueror, but the '*Servant*' of God, gentle, purified, suffering—whether it be Cyrus whom He had anointed, or Jacob whom He had|| chosen, His people with whom, after all their affliction, He was well pleased ; or Jeremiah and the Prophetic order, the victim of their country's sins, led as a lamb to the¶ slaughter ; or One,** more sorrowful, more triumphant, more human, more divine than any of these, the last and true fulfilment of the most spiritual hopes and the highest aspirations of the Chosen People. In the remoter horizon is the vision of a gradual amelioration of the whole†† human race, to be accomplished not solely or chiefly

* Isa. xliv. 9—20, xlv. 5, 6, 7, xlvi. 1, 2, xvii. 1, 4; Baruch vi. 4—73; Bel and the Dragon 19—27.

† The exceptions are Isa. lxiii. 1—6, lxvi. 20—23.

‡ Isa. lvii. 13—21, lx. 17, lxi. 11. § Isa. xli. 8, li. 2, lxiii. 11—14.

|| Ibid. xliv. 1, 28, xlv. 1, xlix. 3.

¶ Ibid. lvi. 13, lvi. 7; comp. Jer. xi. 19.

** Ibid. lvi. 1—12; Matt. viii. 17, xii. 18; Luke iv. 18; Acts viii. 32.

†† Ibid. xlix. 1, 6, 12, l. 22, 23, lx. 1—22, lxi. 1—11.

by the seed of Israel, but by those outlying nations which were but just beginning to take their place in the world's history. In the strains of triumph which welcome the influx of these Gentile strangers, we recognize the prelude of the part which, in the coming fortunes of the Jewish Church, is to be played not only by Cyrus and, if so be, Zoroaster, but by Socrates and Plato, by Alexander and by Cæsar. It has been truly observed that the new elements which Christendom received from the Greek, the Roman and the Teutonic world, were almost as important as those which it received from the Jewish race. Its European, as distinguished from its Asiatic features, form one of the main characteristics which raise it above both Judaism and Mahometanism. To have recognized and anticipated this truth is the rare privilege of the Evangelical Prophet.

"This is the dawn of the new epoch of Jewish and of universal history; full of misgivings and doubts, such as have beset every great revolution in human opinions and institutions. But in the chill of that new dawn, amidst the perplexities of that untried situation, amidst the ruins of those ancient empires, in the eager expectation of those unknown changes—the first words which break the silence, and of which the strains echo through the whole of the next period of the history, and through its endless consequences, are those of the mighty and mysterious Teacher, Prophet and Psalmist both in one:*

the key-note not only of the revived and transformed Israel, but of the rising world of Asia and Europe, and of the Christendom of a still remoter future :

Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people.

"The comfort is of that enduring kind, which is solid now as when it was first uttered. It is the expectation of constant, though unequal, progress towards perfection; the disappearance of present difficulties before the increasing light and energy of the fresh generations of mankind; the confidence that this continued advance is the cause of God himself." (Stanley's *Jewish Church*, Pt. ii. pp. 576—582).

* Is. xl. 1, 2, 4, 31.

With these noble words, expressive of that conscious prospectiveness and diffusiveness of purpose which characterize the Jewish Messianic thought, we open the writings of its principal representative,

THE ISAIAH OF THE RETURN.

(Isaiah xl.—lxvi.)

(*The prophet announces in glowing language that the long-looked-for time is come, when Jehovah* will lead his people back to their own land.*)

[Ch. xl. 1.]

Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and declare to her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned ; that she shall receive from Jehovah's hand blessings double to the punishment of all her sins.

A voice crieth : " In the wilderness prepare ye the way of the Eternal ! Make straight in the desert a highway for our God ! Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low ; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the

* In the prophecies of the later Isaiah it is sometimes matter of difficult decision whether to translate the name *Jehovah* by *The Eternal*, or to leave it untranslated as denoting the national Deity of the Jews. For here is a Jewish prophet in the peculiarly national attitude of leading his compatriots back to their own land, yet his theological and devotional utterances are among the most sublime and unexclusive in the Old Testament. They are un-Judaic ; they are, by anticipation, Christian. The only resource is to adopt the one expression or the other, just as each passage seems to present more prominently the *patriotic* or the *absolute* idea of God. This seeming inconsistency is the true reconciliation, if we are to express the real meaning when to the Jewish reader the unuttered name *Jehovah* would, from its connection, emphasize his eternity. (See note on p. 40.)

rough places plain. And the glory of the Eternal shall be revealed ; and all flesh shall see it together ; for the mouth of the Eternal hath spoken it."

A voice said : "Proclaim it." And I said : What shall I proclaim ? "All flesh is grass ; and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth ; the flower fadeth when the breath of the Eternal bloweth upon it ; surely the people is grass ! The grass withereth, the flower fadeth ; but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

O thou that bringest good tidings to Zion, get thee up upon a high mountain ; O thou that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength ; lift it up ; be not afraid ; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God !

Behold, the Lord the Eternal cometh with might, and his arm shall rule ; behold, his reward is with Him, and his work is before Him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd ; He will gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom ; and will gently lead the ewes that have young.

(From speaking of the mercy and gentleness of the Eternal, the prophet makes transition to his might, and pours contempt upon idols and idolaters.)

[Ch. xl. 12.]

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand ? and meted out heaven with his span ? and gathered the dust of the earth in a measure ? and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance ? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Eternal ? or, being his counsellor, hath taught Him ? With whom took He counsel ? and who instructed Him ? and taught Him the path of justice, and

taught Him knowledge, and shewed to Him the way of understanding ?

Behold ! the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the dust of the balance. Behold, He taketh up the isles as a very little thing ; and Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. All nations, before Him, are as nothing ; they are accounted by Him as less than nothing and vanity.

To whom then will ye liken God ? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him ?

The workman casteth an image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains. He that is too poor to make a costly oblation, chooseth a tree that will not rot ; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman, to prepare a graven image that will not fall down.

Have ye not known ? have ye not heard ? hath it not been told you from the beginning ? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth ? It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers ; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in ; that bringeth princes to nothing ; that maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. Yea ! scarcely are they planted, scarcely are they sown, scarcely hath their stock taken root in the ground, when He bloweth upon them and they wither, and the whirlwind taketh them away as stubble.

(One only is Divine, and Israel may safely trust in Him.)

[Ch. xl. 25.]

To whom then will ye liken me ; or shall I be equal ?

saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things ! He bringeth out their host by number. He calleth them all by their names. By the greatness of his might, for that He is strong in power, not one faileth.

Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel,
“ My way is hidden from Jehovah, and my cause
passeth unregarded by my God”?

Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary ? There is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint ; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall stumble and fall ; but they that wait upon the Eternal shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

(Jehovah speaks. He is supreme, and hath raised up one from the East (Cyrus) to have rule over kings and to restore Israel his servant, whom He will sustain and bless.)

[Ch. xli. 1.]

Keep silence before me, distant lands, and let the nations take new strength. Let them come near ; then let them speak. Let us draw near together to judgment.

Who hath raised up a righteous one [*or, a Deliverer*] from the east, and called him to his foot ? Who hath given up nations before him, and made him rule over kings ? Who hath given them as dust to his sword, as driven stubble to his bow ? He pur-

sued them and passed safely, by a way that his feet had never gone.

Who hath wrought and done it ?—He who called forth the generations from the beginning: I, Jehovah, who am the first and with the last ; I am He.

The distant lands saw it and feared ; the ends of the earth trembled ; they drew near and came. [They helped every one his neighbour, and said one to another, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the smith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smiteth on the anvil, saying : It is ready for the soldering ; and he fasteneth it with nails, that it may not fall.*]

But thou, Israel, art my servant ; Jacob whom I have chosen ; the seed of Abraham my friend ; whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called from the extremities thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee and not cast thee away.

Fear thou not, for I am with thee ; be not dismayed, for I am thy God ; I will strengthen thee ; yea, I will help thee ; yea, I will uphold thee with my faithful right hand. Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded ; they shall be as nothing, and they that strive with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee ; they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.

For I, Jehovah thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee : Fear not ; I will help thee.

Fear not, thou worm Jacob, ye mortals of Israel ; I

* These verses are by some critics supposed to belong to ch. xl. 19, and inserted there accordingly. They interrupt the sense here.

will help thee, saith Jehovah, even thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold! I will make thee a sharp threshing instrument, new and double-edged; thou shalt thresh the mountains and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away; and the whirlwind shall scatter them; and thou shalt rejoice in Jehovah; thou shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.

(All resources are in His sovereign hands.)

[Ch. xli. 17.]

When the poor and needy seek for water and there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst,—I, Jehovah, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle and the olive; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, the pine and the box-tree together; that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of Jehovah hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath effected it.

(All rival deities are defied to work either good or evil, or to predict what is to come.)

[Ch. xli. 21.]

Bring forward your cause, saith Jehovah; bring forward your strong proofs, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth and shew us what shall happen; the things that shall first happen, let them shew us what they be, that we may consider them

and know the latter end of them ; or declare you to us things to come hereafter. Shew us the things that are to come in latter times, that we may know that ye are gods. Yea, do good, or do evil ! that we may look and see it together.

Behold, ye are less than nothing, and your work is less than nought. An abomination is he that chooseth you !

(*The Eternal is raising up, according to his promise, one from the North and the sun-rise, who brings good tidings to Jerusalem,—Cyrus plainly.*)

[Ch. xli. 25.]

I have raised up one from the north and he shall come ; from the rising of the sun he calleth upon my name ; and he shall tread upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay.

Who declared this from the beginning, that we might know it ? and beforetime, that we might say, It is true ? Yea, there was none that shewed it ; yea, there was none that declared it ; yea, there was none that heard your words. I first said to Zion, Behold, behold them ; and gave to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings. For I looked, and there was no man ; even among them, and there was none that gave counsel ; and I inquired of them, and there was no one that could answer a word.

Behold, they are all vanity ; their works are nothing ; their molten images are wind and confusion.

(*The "servant of God," the Jewish people,* shall be rescued, and made an instrument of religious blessing to the world.*)

* See xli. 8, 9, and xlvi. 4, and many other places, which seem to leave no reasonable doubt who the servant of God is. The Septuagint

[Ch. xlvi. 1.]

Behold my servant whom I uphold ; my chosen, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my spirit upon him ; he shall publish judgment among the nations.

He shall not cry aloud nor raise a clamour, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the dimly burning flax shall he not quench. He shall publish judgment according to truth. He shall not fail, nor become weary until he shall have established right in the earth ; and the distant nations shall wait for his law.

Thus saith God, the Eternal, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread forth the earth and that which cometh out of it, who giveth breath to the people upon it, and life to them that walk thereon :

I, Jehovah, have called thee in faithfulness, and will hold thee by thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant to the people, for a light to the nations ; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house.

I am Jehovah ; that is my name ; and my glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to graven images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I now declare : before they spring forth I tell you of them.

(*The purposes of God's providence in the captivity and the deliverance of the Jewish people are described.*)

interprets it so by its translation. So also Rosenmüller. Grotius thinks *my servant* is Isaiah. Others take him to be the Messiah-king of the nation. But the prophet continually says, *my servant Jacob* and *my servant Israel*.

[Ch. xlii. 10.]

Sing unto Jehovah a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down upon the sea and all that fill it; ye distant coasts and inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice; the villages that Kedar doth inhabit. Let the inhabitants of the rocky country sing; let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto Jehovah, and declare his praise in distant lands.

Jehovah shall go forth as a hero; as a mighty warrior He shall rouse his vengeance; He shall cry aloud, yea shout; He shall prevail against his enemies:

"I have long held my peace (He saith); I have been still and refrained myself; now will I cry like a woman in travail; I will destroy and devour at once. I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and dry up the pools. And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

"They shall be turned, they shall be greatly ashamed that trust in graven images, that say to molten images, Ye are our gods. Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see. Who is blind, if not my servant? Or deaf as he to whom I sent my messengers? Who is so blind as my covenanted one? and so blind as Jehovah's servant? Seeing many things, yet thou observest not; thou hast thine ears open, but hearest not!"

Yet Jehovah was gracious unto him for his truth's sake, to give him a law great and glorious.

But this is a people robbed and spoiled ; they are all of them ensnared in holes and hid in prison-houses ; they are for a prey, and none delivereth ; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore.

Who among you will give ear to this ? Who will hearken and attend for the time to come ?

Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers ? did not Jehovah,—He against whom we have sinned ? For they would not walk in his ways ; neither were they obedient unto his law. Therefore He hath poured upon them the fury of his anger and the strength of battle ; and it hath set them on fire round about, yet they knew not ; and it consumed them, yet they laid it not to heart.

(Jehovah promises his care over the returning exiles.)

[Ch. xlivi. 1.]

But now thus saith Jehovah that created thee, O Jacob ; and He that formed thee, O Israel : Fear not, for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name. Thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee ; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt ; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am Jehovah, thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour. I will give Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Because thou art precious in my sight, thou hast been honoured and I have loved thee ; therefore I will give men for thee and people for thy life.

Fear not, for I am with thee. I will bring thy seed

from the east and gather thee from the west. I will say to the north, Give them up ; and to the south, Keep them not back ; bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth ; even every one that is called by my name ; for I have created him for my glory ; I formed him ; yea, I made him. Bring forth the blind people, and they shall have eyes ; and the deaf, and they shall have ears. Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled. Who among them can declare this, and tell us what first shall come to pass ? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified ; or let them hear and say, It is true.

Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen ; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am He. Before me there was no god formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am Jehovah ; and besides me there is no saviour. I declared my purpose, and I have saved. I made it known when there was no strange god among you. Therefore ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, that I am God. Yea, before the day was, I am He ; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand ; I will work, and who shall undo it ?

Thus saith Jehovah, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel : For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have made all her fugitives, even the Chaldeans, go down to the ships of their delight. I am Jehovah, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.

Thus saith Jehovah, who made a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters ; who caused chariot and horse to march forth, the army and the warrior (they lay down together, they rose no more ; they were extinguished, they were quenched like tow) :

Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old ; behold, I will do a new thing ; even now it shall spring forth ; shall ye not know it ?

I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honour me, the jackals and the ostriches, because I give waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself ; they shall shew forth my praise.

(*The ingratitude and disobedience of the people of Israel have not worn out the Divine bounty and forgiveness.*)

[Ch. xliii. 22.]

But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob ; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel ! Thou hast not brought me thy lambs for a burnt-offering, nor honoured me with thy sacrifices. I have not burdened thee with oblations, nor wearied thee with incense. Thou hast bought me no sweet-smelling cane with money ; neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices. But thou hast burdened me with thy sins ; thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.

I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and I will not remember thy sins.

Put me in remembrance ; let us plead together. Set forth thine own cause, that thou mayest justify thyself.

Thy chief leader sinned ; and thy teachers transgressed against me ; and thy princes profaned my sanctuary. Therefore I gave up Jacob to the curse and Israel to reproaches.

Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant, and Israel whom I have chosen. Thus saith Jehovah that made thee and formed thee from the womb, and helpeth thee : Fear not, O Jacob my servant, O Jeshurun [Israel] whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon the thirsty land and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour my spirit upon thy seed and my blessing upon thine offspring. And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-brooks. One shall say, I am Jehovah's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob ; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto Jehovah, and surname himself by the name of Israel.

(The prophet, in the name of the Eternal, again pours contempt upon idolatry, and claims the religious allegiance of Israel. He is a very satirist in tone ; for to the Hebrew prophet the idolater and the idol seem to ridicule each other.)

[Ch. xliv. 6.]

Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel ; his Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts : I am the First, and I am the Last ; and besides me there is no God. And who, like me, hath announced the future ?—(let him declare it and set it in order before me)—since I established the people of old ? The things that are coming and that are to come let them declare. Fear ye not, neither be afraid. Have I not told thee long ago and declared it ? Ye are my witnesses ! Is there a God besides me ? Yea, there is no other Rock ; I know not any.

They that make a graven image are all of them vanity ; and their most valued works shall not profit. Yea, they are their own witnesses :—they see not, nor know ;—that they may be ashamed. Who hath

formed a god, or molten a graven image, that is profitable for nothing?—behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed; the workmen themselves shall blush. Let them all be gathered together; let them stand up;—they shall fear, they shall be ashamed together.

The worker in iron maketh an axe; he worketh in the coals and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms; yea, he is hungry and his strength faileth; he drinketh no water, though he is faint.

The worker in wood stretcheth out his line; he marketh it out with red ochre; he shapeth it with chisels, and he marketh it out with a compass. He maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of the human form, to dwell in its house.

He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the ilex and the oak, and layeth in good store of the trees of the forest; he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it, that it may be for the use of man, for fuel. And he taketh thereof and warmeth himself; yea, he kindleth it and baketh bread;—he also formeth a god and worshipeth it! he maketh it a graven image and falleth down thereto! He burneth half thereof in the fire; thus with half he eateth flesh, he roasteth roast and is satisfied; yea, he warmeth himself and saith, *Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire.* And of the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image! He falleth down unto it and worshipeth it and prayeth unto it, and saith, *Deliver me, for thou art my god!*

They have not known nor understood! Verily their eyes are closed up, that they cannot see; and their heart, that they cannot rightly discern. And none

considereth in his heart, neither hath knowledge nor understanding to say: "I have burnt part of it in the fire: yea also I have baked bread upon the embers thereof; I have roasted flesh and eaten it; and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?"

He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul nor say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

Remember these things, O Jacob, O Israel; for thou art my servant. I formed thee; thou art my servant. O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have made thy transgressions vanish like a cloud, and thy sins like a mist. Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee.

(*The coming redemption is clearly described. Jerusalem is to be restored by the instrumentality of Cyrus, "the Shepherd" and "the Anointed" (Messiah) of the Eternal, who shall "perform all His pleasure."*)

[Ch. xliv. 23.]

Sing, O ye heavens, for Jehovah hath done it; shout, O ye depths of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains; O forest, and every tree therein; for Jehovah hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.

Thus saith Jehovah, thy Redeemer, even He that formed thee from the womb: I am Jehovah, who made all things; who stretched forth the heavens alone; who spread abroad the earth by myself; who frustrateth the tokens of deceivers and maketh diviners foolish; who turneth wise men backward and maketh their knowledge vain; who establisheth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of

his messengers ; who saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited, and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof ; who saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers ; who saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure ; who saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be rebuilt ; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

[Ch. xlvi.]

Thus saith the Eternal to his Anointed, to Cyrus whom I hold by his right hand, to subdue nations before him and ungird the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved doors, and the gates shall not be shut :

I will go before thee, and make the high places level ; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron ; and I will give thee the treasures concealed in darkness, and hidden riches of secret places ; that thou mayest know that I, the Eternal, who call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel my chosen one, I have even called thee by thy name ; I have surnamed thee [*Shepherd* and *Messiah*], though thou hast not known me. I am the Eternal, and there is none else ; there is no God besides me ; I have girded thee, though thou hast not known me ; that they may know from the rising of the sun and from the west that there is none besides me. I am the Eternal, and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness ; I make peace and create evil ; I, the Eternal, do all these things.

Drop down, ye heavens, the dew from above ; and let the clouds shower down righteousness ; let the earth

open her bosom, and let salvation produce her fruit, and let righteousness sprout forth together ; I, the Eternal, have created it.

(The will of the Eternal is supreme, and its supremacy is exerted on behalf of truth, goodness and deliverance.)

[Ch. xlv. 9.]

Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker ! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou ? or thy work say of thee, He hath no hands ? Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What hast thou begotten ? or to his mother, What hast thou brought forth ?

Thus saith the Eternal, the Holy One of Israel and his Maker : Do ye ask of me the things to come concerning my children and concerning the work of my hands ? Commit them to me. I made the earth and created man upon it. I, even my hands, stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded. I have raised him up [Cyrus] in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways ; he shall build my city and shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith Jehovah of hosts.

Thus saith the Eternal : The labour of Egypt and the merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee and shall be thine. They shall come after thee ; in chains they shall pass over, and they shall fall down unto thee and make supplication unto thee, saying : "Surely God is with thee, and there is none else, no other God."

Verily, thou art a God, that hiddest thy purposes, O God of Israel, the Saviour !

They shall be ashamed and also confounded, all of

them ; the makers of idols shall go to confusion. But Israel shall be saved by the Eternal, with an everlasting salvation ; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

For thus saith the Eternal who created the heavens, God himself who formed the earth and made it ; who established it ; who created it not in vain ; who formed it to be inhabited : I am the Eternal, and there is none else ; I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth ; I said not unto the seed of Jacob : Seek ye me [but it shall be] in vain. I, the Eternal, speak righteousness, I declare the things that are right.

Assemble yourselves and come ; gather yourselves together, ye that are escaped from the nations ! They are without understanding who carry about the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Proclaim and bring them near ; yea, let them take counsel together. Who hath declared this from ancient time ? Who hath told it of old ? Have not I, the Eternal ? And there is no God else besides me, a just God and a Saviour ; there is none besides me.

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth ; for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself ; the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not be revoked, THAT UNTO ME EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW, EVERY TONGUE SHALL SWEAR, SAYING : ONLY IN THE ETERNAL HAVE I RIGHTEOUSNESS AND STRENGTH.

Even to Him shall men come ; and all that are incensed against Him shall be ashamed. Through the Eternal shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory in Him.

(*The Babylonian idols are falling. How contemptible is idolatry! Let the Israelites shew themselves men, and be no longer stubborn-hearted:—their deliverance is at hand.*)

[Ch. xlvi. 1.]

Bel boweth down; Nebo stoopeth. Their idols are laid upon the beasts and upon the cattle. What were your burdens are packed upon them, a burden to the weary beast.

They stoop; they bow down together; they cannot rescue the burden, but go themselves into captivity.

Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob; and all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been a load upon me from the birth, a burden from the womb. And even to your old age, I am He; and even to hoary hairs I will carry you; I have made and I will bear; I will carry and will deliver you.

To whom will ye liken me and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like? They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance. They hire a goldsmith, and he maketh it a god; they fall down, yea, they worship it. They lift him upon the shoulder; they carry him and set him in his place, and there he standeth; from his place he shall not move. Yea, one may cry unto him; yet he cannot answer, nor save him out of his trouble.

Remember this, and shew yourselves men; lay it to heart, O ye transgressors! Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying: "My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure;" calling an eagle from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country. Yea, I have spoken it,

I will also bring it to pass ; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

Hearken unto me, ye stubborn-hearted, that are far from deliverance. I bring near my deliverance ; it shall not be far off ; and my salvation shall not tarry ; and I will give to Zion salvation, to Israel my glory.

(*The kingdom of Babylon itself is doomed by the same supreme power which sent Israel into captivity. Her greatness, pride and skill, shall all be of no avail.*)

[Ch. xlvi. 1.]

Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon ; sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans ; for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the mill and grind meal ; raise thy veil, lift up thy train ; make bare the leg, pass through the rivers. Thy nakedness shall be uncovered ; yea, thy shame shall be seen. I will take vengeance, and I will make peace with no man.

Our Redeemer is Jehovah of hosts ; his name is, THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL.

Sit thou silent and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans ; for thou shalt no more be called the mistress of kingdoms.

When I was wroth with my people, I polluted mine inheritance and gave them into thine hand. Thou didst shew them no mercy. Even upon the aged thou didst very heavily lay thy yoke. And thou saidst, "I shall be mistress for ever ;" so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst thou consider the end of it.

Therefore now hear this, thou voluptuous one, that

dweltest carelessly, that sayest in thy heart, "I am she, and there is none else besides me ; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children :"

Behold, both these things shall come to thee in a moment on one day; the loss of children and widowhood. In full measure shall they come upon thee, in the multitude of thy sorceries and the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness ; thou hast said, "None seeth me." Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, they have perverted thee ; and thou hast said in thine heart, "I am she, and there is none else besides me." Therefore shall evil come upon thee, of which thou shalt not know the dawn ; and mischief shall fall upon thee which thou shalt not be able to expiate ; and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly when thou shalt not know.

Persist now in thine enchantments and in the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth ! Perhaps thou shalt be able to profit by them ! Perhaps thou mayest terrify.

Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the moon-prognosticators, stand up and save thee from these things that are coming upon thee ! Behold they are as stubble : the fire shall burn them ; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame. Not a coal to warm one, not a fire to sit by, shall be left of them. Thus shall they be to thee with whom thou hast laboured, those with whom thou hast traded from thy youth. They shall depart every one to his own quarter ; none shall save thee.

(False-hearted and formal Jews are reproved. Israel will be restored, not for their own sake, but of Jehovah's good pleasure and sovereign grace. They are exhorted to leave Babylon with confidence and joy.)

[Ch. xlviii. 1.]

Hear ye this, O house of Jacob ; ye who are called by the name of Israel and are come forth from the fountain of Judah ; ye who swear by the name of Jehovah and profess the God of Israel, but not in truth nor in righteousness. (For they call themselves of the holy city and stay themselves upon the God of Israel ; Jehovah of hosts is his name.)

I declared the former things long ago ; and they went forth out of my mouth and I shewed them. I did them suddenly and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew and thy brow is brass, I declared it to thee long ago ; before it came to pass I shewed it thee ; lest thou shouldst say : " Mine idol hath done these things, and my graven image and my molten image hath commanded them."

Thou hast heard ; see it all fulfilled ; and will ye not acknowledge it ?

From this time I make thee to hear new things, kept secret hitherto, which thou hast not known. They are created now, and not of old ; before this day thou hast not heard them ; lest thou shouldst say, Behold I knew them. Yea, thou hast not heard, thou hast not known ; yea, from of old thine ear was not opened to receive them ; for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and that thou wast called a transgressor from thy birth.

For my name's sake I will defer mine anger, and for my praise will I restrain myself towards thee, that

I cut thee not off. Behold I have refined thee, but found no silver; I have proved thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, for mine own sake, I do it; for how would my name be profaned! And I will not give my glory to another.

Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel my called; I am He, I am the First, I also am the Last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens. I called them; they presented themselves together.

Assemble yourselves, all of you, and hear! Who among you hath declared these things? He whom Jehovah loveth shall do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans. I, even I, have spoken; yea, I have called him; I have brought him, and his way shall be prosperous.

Come ye near to me, hear ye this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there was I; and now the Lord the Eternal hath sent me and his spirit.

Thus saith Jehovah, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Eternal, thy God, who teacheth thee to profit, who leadeth thee by the way thou shouldst go. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea. Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the fruit of thy body as the pebbles thereof. His name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

Go ye forth from Babylon; flee ye from the Chaldeans; with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye:

"The Eternal hath redeemed his servant Jacob. They thirst not in the deserts through which He leadeth

them ; He causeth the waters to flow out of the rock for them ; He cleaveth the rock also, and the waters gush out."

There is no peace, saith the Eternal, unto the wicked.

(Israel, the servant of God, declares his own destiny for the salvation and blessing of the world in general, though now despised and abhorred among men. The restoration is promised in highly poetical terms.)

[Ch. xlix. 1.]

Listen to me, ye distant lands, and hearken, ye people from afar :

Jehovah called me at my birth ; from my mother's womb hath He made mention of my name. And He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword ; in the shadow of his hand hath He hid me and made me a polished arrow ; He hath laid me up in store in his quiver, and said unto me : Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

But I said, "I have laboured in vain ; I have spent my strength for nought and for vanity." Yet surely my cause is with Jehovah, and the reward of my work with my God.

And now, saith Jehovah, that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, that Israel may be gathered to Him, that I may be honoured in the eyes of Jehovah and that God may be my strength,—thus He saith : It is a small thing that thou shouldst be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel ; I will also give thee for a light to the nations, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth.

Thus saith Jehovah, the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy

One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to the servant of rulers : Kings shall see and rise up ; princes also shall pay homage ; because of Jehovah who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who hath chosen thee.

Thus saith Jehovah : In the time of acceptance I have heard thee, and in the day of salvation I have helped thee. And I will preserve thee and give thee for a covenant of the people, to restore the land, to cause the desolate heritages to be inherited ; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth ; to them that are in darkness, Come to the light. They shall be fed in the ways, and find pasture on all the bare heights. They shall not hunger nor thirst ; neither shall the heat nor the sun smite them ; for He that hath mercy on them will lead them, even by the springs of water will He guide them. And I will make all my mountains an even way, and my highways shall be raised. Behold, these shall come from far ;* and lo ! these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim.

Sing, O heavens ! and be joyful, O earth ! and break forth into singing, O mountains ! for Jehovah comforteth his people, and hath compassion upon his afflicted ones.

But Zion saith : Jehovah hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.

Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ? Yea, they may forget ; yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.

* Far East, Grotius thinks ; then Sinim is the *South* (the Sinai district). Others make Sinim to be *China* or the far East ; but that name is different in the Hebrew, beginning with *ts* instead of *s*.

Thy walls are continually before me. They that destroyed thee shall soon become thy builders ; and they that laid thee waste shall become thine offspring.

Lift up thine eyes round about and behold : all these gather themselves together and come to thee. As I live, saith Jehovah, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all as with an ornament, and bind them on thee as a bride doth. For thy waste and desolate places and thy devastated land shall even now be too narrow by reason of inhabitants ; and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. The children which thou shalt have after thou hast lost the other* shall yet say in thine ears, The place is too narrow for me ; make room for me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have been bereaved and barren, a captive and an exile ? Who then hath brought up these ? Behold, I was left alone ; these then, where were they ?

Thus saith the Lord Jehovah : Behold, I will lift up my hand to the nations, and set up my standard to the peoples ; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy foster-fathers, and queens thy nursing-mothers. They shall bow down to thee with their face toward the ground, and lick the dust of thy feet. And thou shalt know that I am Jehovah ; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the righteous captive be rescued ? Yea, thus saith Jehovah : Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken

* Literally, *Children of thy bereavement, or of thy barrenness.*

away, and the prey of the terrible shall be rescued ; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. And them that oppress thee I will make to eat their own flesh, and they shall be drunken with their own blood. And all flesh shall know that I am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

(*By figures derived from Jewish usages,—divorce by a written document on the part of the husband, sale of children for the father's debt,—Jehovah indignantly declares that his children can only have been repudiated through their own fault.*)

[Ch. 1. 1.)

Thus saith Jehovah : Where is the bill of your mother's divorce by which I dismissed her ? Or who is he among my creditors to whom I have sold you ? Behold, for your iniquities have you sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away. Wherefore, when I came, was there no man at hand ? when I called, was there none to answer ? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem ? or have I no power to deliver ? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness. Their fish stink because there is no water, and die for thirst. I clothe the heavens with blackness and make sackcloth their covering.

(*The prophet again remonstrates with those who do not care to return ; he will pursue his mission in spite of opposition and insult.*)

[Ch. 1. 4.]

The Lord Jehovah hath given me the tongue of instruction, that I may know how to help the weary with

my word. He wakeneth me morning by morning ; He wakeneth mine ear as those who receive instruction. The Lord Jehovah hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair ; I hid not my face from insult and spitting. For the Lord Jehovah will help me ; therefore I shall not be confounded. Therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame. He is near that justifieth me ; who will contend with me ? Let us stand up together. Who is mine adversary ? Let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord Jehovah will help me ; who is he that shall condemn me ? Lo, they shall all wax old as a garment ; the moth shall eat them up.

Who is there among you that feareth Jehovah ? Let him hearken to the voice of his servant. Who is there that walketh in darkness and hath no light ? Let him trust in the name of Jehovah and lean upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks ; walk ye in the light of your fire and in the sparks which ye have kindled. This shall ye have from mine hand : ye shall lie down in sorrow.

(To the faithful among the captives he promises deliverance, and they shall be a blessing to other nations.)

[Ch. li. 1.]

Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek Jehovah ! Look unto the rock whence ye were hewn, and to the hollow of the cave whence ye were digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you. For I called him

when alone, and blessed him and increased him. So Jehovah will comfort Zion ; He will comfort all her waste places ; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of Jehovah. Joy and gladness shall be found therein ; thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

Attend to me, my people ; and give ear unto me, O my nation ; for a law shall proceed from me, and I will establish my statutes for a light of the nations. My deliverance is near ; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arm shall judge the nations ; distant lands shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.

Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath ; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment ; and they that dwell therein shall die like gnats ;—but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

Hearken to me, ye that know righteousness ; the people in whose heart is my law. Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings : for the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the grub shall eat them like wool ; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

(The prophet appeals to the Eternal, who replies :)

[Ch. li. 9.]

Awake ! awake ! put on strength, O arm of the Eternal ! Awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not the same that smote Rahab,* and wounded the crocodile ? Art thou not

* Or *the Boaster*, i.e. Egypt.

the same that dried the sea, the waters of the great deep ; that made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over ? Thus shall the redeemed of the Eternal return. They shall come with singing unto Zion ; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head. They shall obtain gladness and joy ; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

I, even I, am He that comforteth you. Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall become as grass ; and forgettest the Eternal thy Maker, who stretched forth the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth ; and fearest continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy ?

Where now is the fury of the oppressor ? The captive shall soon be loosed, that he die not in the pit, nor his bread fail. For I am the Eternal thy God, that stilleth the sea when its waves roar,— whose name is the Eternal of hosts.

I will put my words in thy mouth, and will cover thee with the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, "Thou art my people!"

(The prophet accepts this commission ; and, apostrophizing Jerusalem, endeavours to rouse the people to action.)

[Ch. li. 17.]

Awake ! awake ! stand up, O Jerusalem ! thou that hast drunk at the hand of Jehovah the cup of his fury ! thou hast drunk the dregs of the cup of trembling !

There is not one to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth ; neither is there any that

taketh her by the hand, of all the sons whom she hath brought up.

These two things are come unto thee, and who bemoaneth thee? desolation and destruction,—famine and the sword,—how shall I comfort thee? Thy sons have fainted; they lie at the head of all the streets, as a deer in a net; they are full of the wrath of Jehovah, the rebuke of thy God.

Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted; and drunken, but not with wine; Thus saith thy Lord, Jehovah, and thy God who pleadeth the cause of his people: Behold, I take out of thine hand the cup of trembling, the dregs of the cup of my wrath; thou shalt no more drink it again. But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; who have said to thy soul: "Bow down that we may pass over thee;" and (to whom) thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street to them that passed over.

Awake! awake! put on thy strength, O Zion! Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, thou holy city! for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise and sit erect, O Jerusalem; loose the bonds from off thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion!

For thus saith the Eternal: Ye were sold for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money.

For thus saith the Lord the Eternal: My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there. Then the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. And now, what have I here, saith the Eternal, that my people is taken away for nought? and they who rule over them exult, saith the Eternal; and my name continually every day is blasphemed. There-

fore my people shall know my name ; therefore they shall know in that day, that I am He that doth speak. Behold, it is I.

(How blest the tidings of deliverance, and how welcome the sight of the messengers !)

[Ch. lii. 7.]

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace ! that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation ! that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth ! The voice of thy watchmen ! They lift up the voice together ; yea, they shout aloud ; for they see face to face that Jehovah returneth to Zion.

Break forth into joy ; shout together, ye ruins of Jerusalem ! for Jehovah hath comforted his people ; He hath redeemed Jerusalem. Jehovah hath made bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations ; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Depart ye, depart ye ; go ye out from thence ; touch no unclean thing ; go ye out of the midst of her ; be ye clean that bear the vessels of Jehovah. For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go in flight ; for Jehovah will go before you ; and the God of Israel will be your rere-guard.

(The servant of God is described in his present humiliation and in his coming exaltation.)*

* By the "servant of God," in this remarkable passage, it seems most natural to understand the collective Jewish people, as in many previous sections,—“my servant Israel,” “my servant Jacob.” Under this view the people is personified as an individual. Some, however, think the prophet himself is intended ; some (as Grotius) think he alludes to Jeremiah, who was grievously persecuted (see Jer. xxxvii. xxxviii.) ; and that under the immediate character of Jeremiah, that

[Ch. lii. 13.]

Behold, my servant shall deal prudently ; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and be very high.

As many were astonished at thee (his visage was marred more than any man's, and his form more than the sons of men) ; so shall he cause many nations to admire ; kings shall shut their mouths before him ; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall consider.

(*The surrounding nations and their kings seem to be represented* as commenting upon the strange yet impressive fate of the Jewish nation, and welcoming it as the means of their own redemption.*)

[Ch. liii. 1.]

But who hath believed what we have heard ? and to whom hath the arm of the Eternal been revealed ?

For he grew up before him as a weak plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. He had no form nor comeliness, that we should look at him ; nor beauty that we should delight in him. He was despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief ; as one that hideth his face from us ; he was despised, and we esteemed him

of the Great Messiah is also shadowed. Some think the leader of the returning people, Prince Zerubbabel, is meant ; some, the Royal House of David, long humiliated, now about to be restored to power (as they hoped) ; some think the expected earthly Messiah (whether Zerubbabel or other royal *Branch*) ; some, the spiritual Messiah. The general sense must decide to each person's own mind. In some previous passages there is a certain confusion of *grammatical* persons —between *thou* and *he*—as in the present passage ; where yet it is plain that the people collectively are intended. (See ch. xlvi. 5, 6, &c.)

* Rosenmüller, *in loco.*

not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows ; and we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions ; he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement by which our peace is effected was laid upon him ; and with his stripes we are healed.

All we, like sheep, had gone astray ; we had turned every one to his own way ; and the Eternal hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth ; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter ; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.

By oppression and punishment he was taken away ; and who of his own generation considered [cared] that he was cut off out of the land of the living [and said to himself], “For the transgression of my people he was stricken ?” And he made his grave with the wicked and was with the ungodly in his death, although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Eternal to bruise him ; He hath put him to grief.

[*The Eternal speaks.*]

Since his soul maketh an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Eternal shall prosper in his hand.

He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied ; by the knowledge of him shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong ; because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and

was numbered with the transgressors, because he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.

(The enlargement, prosperity and religious eminence of the holy nation, under their royal leader and ruler, are promised; and all nations are invited to drink of the living waters with them.)

[Ch. liv. 1.]

Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear! break forth into singing and shout for joy, thou that didst not travail with child! For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith Jehovah.

Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let the curtains of thine habitations be stretched forth; spare not; lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth with increase on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the nations and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame; for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

For thy Maker is thine husband, Jehovah of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall He be called. For Jehovah hath recalled thee, as a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, and as the wife of one's youth that hast been rejected, saith thy God. For a little moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I receive thee again. In the vehemence of wrath I hid my face from thee for

a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith Jehovah thy Redeemer. For this shall be as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I sware that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith Jehovah that hath mercy on thee.

O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and disconsolate! Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy battlements of rubies, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all the circuit of thy walls of precious stones. And all thy children shall be taught of Jehovah, and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established. Be thou far from anxiety, for thou shalt have nothing to fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee. Behold, if any be leagued against thee, it is not by me; whosoever shall be leagued together against thee shall fall before thee. Behold, I create the smith who bloweth the coals in the fire and bringeth forth the weapon for its work; and I create the destroyer to lay waste. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that riseth against thee in judgment thou shalt refute. This is the heritage of the servants of Jehovah; and their justification is from me, saith Jehovah.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters! and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat! Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and

without price. Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good; and let your soul delight itself with delicacies. Incline your ear and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live. And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

Behold, I have given him for a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander to the peoples. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not; and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee for the sake of Jehovah thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He hath glorified thee.

Seek ye Jehovah, while He may be found; call ye upon Him, while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I have sent it. For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace;

the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree; and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to Jehovah for a name, for an everlasting sign, that shall not be cut off.

(The heathen are again invited to the new Israel, and welcomed equally with native Jews: God's house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples, they keeping the sabbath and doing righteousness.)

[Ch. lvi. 1.]

Thus saith Jehovah: Keep ye justice and do righteousness; for my salvation is near to come, and my deliverance to be revealed.

Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath and profaneth it not, and restraineth his hand from doing evil.

Neither let the son of the stranger that hath joined himself to Jehovah speak, saying, "Jehovah hath utterly separated me from his people;" neither let the barren say, "Behold, I am a dry tree." For thus saith Jehovah unto the barren: They that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant, even unto them will I give, in my house and within my walls, a portion and a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to Jehovah, to serve Him, and to love the name of Jehovah, to be his servants; every one that keepeth the sabbath and profaneth it not, and taketh hold of my covenant;

even them will I bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL PEOPLES. The Lord the Eternal saith, who gathereth the outcasts of Israel: Yet will I gather others to him, besides his own gathered ones.

(An abrupt denunciation of false and careless advisers seems hardly to connect itself with what precedes; but (as a separate Burden) may rightly introduce the complaint which follows, of the stupidity, idolatry, vice and worldliness which make many unwilling to leave Babylon. Yet those who trust in Jehovah shall be restored.)

[Ch. lvi. 9.]

All ye beasts of the field, come to devour; yea, all ye beasts of the forest. His watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant; they are all dumb dogs; they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough; and the shepherds themselves cannot understand. They all turn aside to their own way, every one for his own gain from his own quarter. Come ye (say they), I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to-morrow's cheer shall be as to-day's and much more abundant.

Thus the righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away because of the evil. He entereth into peace; they shall rest in their beds, every one that walketh in uprightness. But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorcerers, ye seed of the adulterer and the harlot. Against whom do

ye sport yourselves ? Against whom do ye make wide the mouth and put out the tongue ? Are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood, burning with lust for idols under every green tree, slaying children in the valleys under the clefts of the rocks ? Among the smooth stones of the valley is thy portion ; these, these, are thy lot ; to them also hast thou poured a drink-offering, thou hast offered a meal-offering. Shall I not be angry at these things ?

Upon a high and lofty mountain thou hast set thy bed ; even thither hast thou gone up to offer sacrifice. Behind the doors and the door-posts hast thou set up thy memorial. Thou hast departed from me and hast gone up ; thou hast enlarged thy bed and made a covenant with them ; thou lovest their bed, thou choosest a place in it. Thou goest to the king* anointed with ointment, and multipliest thy perfumes, and sendest thy messengers afar, and debasest thyself even unto Hades. Thou art wearied with the length of thy journeys, yet thou sayest not, It is in vain. Thou yet findest strength in thine hand ; therefore thou art not grieved.

And of whom hast thou been fearful or afraid, that thou hast spoken lies, and hast not remembered me, nor thought on me in thy heart ? Have I not been silent even of old ; and so thou fearest me not ? But now I announce thy deliverance, and thy works profit thee not. When thou criest, let thy host of idols deliver thee ! But the wind shall carry them all away ; vanity shall take them.

* To Moloch, or other idol ; the name Moloch being the Hebrew for king. See Rosenmüller's note, who, however, translates it, *the king*.

But he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land and shall inherit my holy mountain. And he shall say: Cast ye up, cast up the causeway, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people.

For thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit would fail before me, and the souls which I have made. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid myself and was wroth; and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways,* and will heal him; I will lead him also and restore comforts to him and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips, Peace, Peace, to him that is far off and to him that is near, saith the Eternal; and I will heal him. But the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

(The prophet is instructed to denounce the superstitious reliance on outward ceremonies. He describes a true fast and true religion. The deliverance is delayed by the unworthiness of the people, but it will assuredly come.)

[Ch. lviii. 1.]

Cry aloud; spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

* "His amended ways," Grotius explains.

Yet they seek me daily, and desire to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness and forsook not the ordinance of their God ; they ask of me the ordinances of justice ; they take delight in approaching to God.

Wherefore have we fasted (say they), and thou seest not ? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge ?

Behold, in the day of your fast ye pursue pleasure and oppress all your labourers. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. Ye do not fast this day so as to make your voice to be heard on high.

Is this such a fast as I have chosen ? a day for a man to afflict his soul ? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush ? and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him ? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to Jehovah ?

Is not this the fast that I have chosen ? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke ? Is it not, to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house ? when thou seest the naked, that thou clothe him ; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh ?

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall spring forth speedily ; and thy righteousness shall go before thee ; the glory of Jehovah shall be thy rere-guard. Then shalt thou call, and Jehovah will answer ; thou shalt cry, and He will say, Here I am.

If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the pointing of the finger and speaking vanity ; and

if thou pour out thy soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul ; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as noon-day. And Jehovah will guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make strong thy bones. And thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not. And they that are of thee shall rebuild the old waste places. Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations ; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the breach, The Restorer of paths to dwell in.

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day ; and call the sabbath a delight, holy to Jehovah and honourable ; and shalt honour it, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking vain words ; then shalt thou delight thyself in Jehovah ; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee on the heritage of Jacob thy father : for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.

Behold, the hand of Jehovah is not shortened, that it cannot save ; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear ; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you that He will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity ; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. None calleth for justice, nor pleadeth for truth ; they trust in vanity and speak lies ; they conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity. They hatch viper's eggs, and weave the spider's web ; he that eateth of their eggs dieth ; and when one is crushed, a viper breaketh forth. Their webs will not serve for garments, neither shall they

cover themselves with their works ; their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood ; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity ; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not ; and there is no judgment in their goings ; they have made them crooked paths ; whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us. We wait for light, but behold obscurity ; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall, like the blind ; yea, we grope as if we had no eyes ; we stumble at noon-day as in the night ; in fertile fields we are as dead men. We roar, all of us, like bears ; and mourn sore like doves ; we look for judgment, but it cometh not ; for salvation, but it is far from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us ; for we are conscious of our transgressions, and as for our iniquities we know them, in transgressing and lying against Jehovah, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off ; for truth stumbleth in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth ; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey.

And Jehovah saw it ; and it displeased Him that there was no judgment. And He saw that there was none to help, and wondered that there was none to interpose. Therefore his own arm brought salvation to Him, and his own righteousness sustained Him.

For He hath put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head ; and He hath put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and clad Himself with zeal as with a cloak. According to their deeds will He repay ; fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies ; to the distant coasts He will repay recompence.

So shall they fear the name of Jehovah from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun ; when He shall come like a pent-up stream which the breath of Jehovah driveth forward.

And a Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith Jehovah.

As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith Jehovah : My spirit which is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith Jehovah, from henceforth and for ever.

(The restored Jerusalem is apostrophized, and described first in terms of temporal prosperity and greatness, and then of religious and moral blessedness.)

[Ch. lx. 1.]

Arise ! be enlightened ! for thy light is come ; and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee. For, behold ! darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the peoples ; but Jehovah will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

Lift up thine eyes round about, and see : they all gather themselves together, they come to thee. Thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall

be carried at their side. Then shalt thou see and be gladdened ; and thine heart shall throb and swell, because the riches of the sea shall be turned unto thee, the wealth of the nations shall come unto thee.

A multitude of camels shall cover thee ; the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah ; they shall all come from Sheba ; they shall bring gold and incense ; and they shall shew forth the praises of Jehovah.

All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee ; the rams of Nebaoth shall minister unto thee ; they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.

Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to the dove-cotes ? Surely the distant coasts shall await me ; and the ships of Tarshish among the first ; to bring thy sons from afar, their silver and their gold with them, because of the name of Jehovah thy God, of the Holy One of Israel ; for He hath glorified thee.

And the sons of the stranger shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister to thee. For in my wrath I smote thee ; but in my favour have I had mercy upon thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually ; they shall not be shut day nor night ; that the wealth of the Gentiles may be brought to thee, and their kings with their retinues. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish ; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.

The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee ; the fir-tree, the pine and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary ; and I will make the place glorious where I set my feet [*Heb.* the place of my feet].

The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee ; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet ; and they shall call thee The City of Jehovah, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the nations, and be nursed on the breast of kings ; and thou shalt know that I, Jehovah, am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

Instead of brass I will bring thee gold ; and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron. I will also make thine officers peace and thy magistrates righteousness. Violence shall be no more heard in thy land ; wasting nor destruction within thy borders. But thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

The sun shall be no more thy light by day ; neither with her brightness shall the moon give light unto thee ; but Jehovah shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw herself ; for Jehovah shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

Thy people also shall all be righteous ; they shall inherit the land for ever,—the branch of my planting, the work of my hands,—that I may be glorified. The little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation ; I, Jehovah, will hasten it in its time.

(The prophet rejoices and exults in his blessed message.)
[Ch. lxi. 1.]

The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me, because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the afflicted. He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of Jehovah, and the day of retribution of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, yea, to give them ornament in place of ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness: that they may be called Trees of Righteousness, the Plantation of Jehovah for his glory.

And they shall rebuild the old waste places; they shall raise up the desolations of former times; and they shall repair the wasted cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks; and the sons of the alien shall be your ploughmen and your vine-dressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of Jehovah; men shall call you the Ministers of our God. Ye shall eat the riches of the nations; and in their glory ye shall boast yourselves. For your shame ye shall have double recompence. Yea, for their ignominy they shall rejoice in their portion; therefore in their land they shall possess double; everlasting joy shall be their portion.

For I, Jehovah, love judgment; I hate robbery and iniquity; and I will give them the reward of their work with faithfulness, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. And their seed shall be known among the nations, and their offspring

among the peoples. All that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are a seed which Jehovah hath blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in Jehovah; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness; as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord Jehovah will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

For Zion's sake will I not keep silence, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth. And the nations shall see thy righteousness and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall declare. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken, neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah (my-delight-is-in-her), and thy land Beulah (the-married-woman); for Jehovah delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy restorer wed thee; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth in his bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, who shall never hold their peace day nor night. Ye that remind Jehovah, keep not silence and give Him no rest, until He establish Jerusalem, till He

make her a praise in the earth. Jehovah hath sworn by his right hand and by the arm of his strength : Surely I will no more give thy corn to be food for thine enemies ; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine for which thou hast laboured ; but they that have reaped it shall eat it and praise Jehovah ; and they that have gathered it in shall drink it in the courts of my holiness.

Go through ! go through the gates ! Prepare ye the way of the people. Cast up, cast up the highway ; gather out the stones ; lift up a standard for the peoples. Behold, Jehovah hath proclaimed unto the end of the world :

“Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy Saviour cometh. Behold, his reward is with him and his work before him. And they shall be called, The Holy People, The Redeemed of Jehovah. And thou shalt be called, The Much-desired, The City unforsaken.”

(The preceding section is pretty plainly the prophet's song on the actual departure from Babylon. Assuming (if we may) that his utterances have been preserved nearly in the order of their delivery, all that precedes was spoken to his countrymen while still in Babylon, and the rest of the book belongs to the time of the journey and entrance into the holy land. The short dramatic section next following represents the deliverer of Israel as the conqueror of Edom, under which name probably all the hostile tribes who met the Jews on their march through the desert may be included. It may well have been spoken for their encouragement on their way. The most hostile shall be subdued before them. But the old-standing feud with Edom would make them expect opposition from that quarter especially.)

[Ch. lxiii. 1.]

[*The prophet, or the people, speaks.*]

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with reddened garments from Bosrah ? This, that is glorious in his apparel, marching on in the greatness of his strength ?

[*Jehovah replies.*]

It is I, that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

[*The prophet, or the people.*]

Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel ? and thy garments like those of him that treadeth in the wine-vat ?

[*Jehovah.*]

I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the peoples there was no one with me ; and I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my fury ; and their blood was sprinkled on my garments, and I have stained all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help ; and I wondered that there was none to uphold ; therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me ; and my wrath, it upheld me. And I trod down the peoples in mine anger, and crushed them in my fury ; and have brought down their strength to the ground.

(*The prophet's song of thanksgiving follows, in which he briefly recapitulates the history of the Jewish nation.*)

[Ch. lxiii. 7.]

I will mention the loving-kindnesses of Jehovah, and the praises of Jehovah; according to all that Jehovah hath bestowed upon us ; and the great goodness toward the house of Israel which He hath bestowed

on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses. For He said: "Surely they are my people; children that will not lie;" so He was their Saviour. In all their adversity He was not adverse, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity He redeemed them, and He bare them and carried them all the days of old.

But they rebelled and vexed his holy spirit. Therefore He turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them.

Then his people remembered the days of old, the days of Moses, saying: Where is He that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is He that put his holy spirit within him? that led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before him to make himself an everlasting name? that led them through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness, so that they should not stumble? As the herd goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of Jehovah caused him to rest. So didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.

Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory. Where is thy zeal and thy might? Thy pity and thy compassion for me, are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us and Israel acknowledge us not. Thou, O Jehovah, art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting. Wherefore, O Jehovah, dost thou suffer us to wander from thy ways, and harden our hearts against thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake, for the tribes of thine inheritance. The people of thy

holiness possessed it but a little while ; our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary. We are become as in the beginning when thou didst not rule over us, and when we were not called by thy name.

O that thou wouldest rend the heavens ! that thou wouldest come down ! that the mountains might flow down at thy presence (as when fire kindleth dry fuel, as when fire causeth water to boil), to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence ! When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down ; at thy presence the mountains flowed down. For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, a God besides thee, who doeth so for him that waiteth for Him. Thou meetest him that rejoiceth to do righteousness ; those that remember thee in thy ways. Behold, thou art wroth, for we have sinned in these things of old ; and shall we be saved ? For we are all as an unclean thing ; and all our righteousnesses as a filthy garment ; and we all do fade as a leaf ; and our iniquities, like the wind, carry us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee ; for thou hast hidden thy face from us and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

But now, O Jehovah ! thou art our Father. We are the clay, and thou our potter. We are all the work of thine hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Jehovah ! neither remember our iniquity for ever. Behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people. Thy holy cities are a wilderness ; Zion is a wilderness ; Jerusalem is a desolation. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt

up with fire ; and all our pleasant things are laid waste. Wilt thou restrain thyself at these things, O Jehovah ? Wilt thou keep silence and afflict us very sore ?

(*Jehovah replies in words of tender promise, not unmixed with reproach for the unworthy past. The seed shall spring forth from Jacob. New heavens and a new earth shall arise, and the Messianic days of peace shall come.*)

[Ch. lxv. 1.]

I have answered them that asked not ; I have been found by them that sought me not. I have said, Behold me, behold me ! to a nation that called not upon my name. I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way not good, after their own thoughts ; a people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face ; that sacrificeth in gardens and burneth incense upon bricks ; who dwell in sepulchres and lodge in caverns ; who eat swine's flesh, and in whose vessels are pieces of unclean things ; who say, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou." These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burneth all the day.

Behold, it is written before me : I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom, your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith Jehovah ;—those who burned incense upon the mountains and blasphemed me upon the hills ; therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.

Thus saith Jehovah : As when one findeth a good grape in the cluster, and saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it ; so will I do for my servants' sake, that I

may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains ; and my chosen shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.

But ye, who have deserted Jehovah, who forget my holy mountain, who prepare a table for Gad [Fortune] and furnish a drink-offering for Meni [Fate] ; —you have I destined to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter ; because, when I called, ye did not answer ; when I spake, ye did not hear ; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not. Therefore thus saith Jehovah God : Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry ; behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty ; behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed ; behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen ones ; for the Lord Jehovah shall slay thee and call his servants by another name ; so that he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth ; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth ; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

For, behold ! I create new heavens and a new earth ; and the former ones shall not be remembered nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create ; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy. And I

will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people ; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thenceforth an infant of few days, nor an old man that hath not fulfilled his days ; for he that dieth at a hundred years shall die a boy ;—but the sinner, a hundred years old, shall be accursed. And they shall build houses and inhabit them ; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them ;—they shall not build and another inhabit ; they shall not plant and another eat. For as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people ; and my chosen ones shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble ; for they are the seed of the blessed of Jehovah, and their offspring are so with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear.

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox ; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith Jehovah.*

(Probably the concluding chapter was spoken in immediate reference either to the foundation or to the dedication of the restored Temple. And nothing could be more appropriate, though stern and thoroughly Jewish. We also miss the warmth and enthusiasm of the opening of the book. The prophet reminds the people of the worthlessness of sacrifice without virtue ; describes the vigorous revival of the city ; pronounces the Divine blessing upon it ; again

* The first Isaiah had developed this poetical image more fully. See p. 65. (Is. xi. 6—9.)

denounces idolatrous practices, and welcomes all nations to the New Jerusalem. The new heavens and new earth shall open, and all mankind come to worship the One true and living God, under the forms and sanctions of the Law.)

[Ch. lxvi. 1.]

Thus saith the Eternal : The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool ; where is this house that ye build unto me ? and where is this place of my rest ? For all these things hath my hand made, and all these things are mine, saith the Eternal. But to this man will I look, even to him that is humble and of a contrite spirit, and who revereth my word.

He that slayeth an ox, killeth a man ; that sacrificeth a lamb, beheadeth a dog ; that offereth an oblation, offereth swine's blood ; that burneth incense, blesseth an idol ! Yea, they have chosen their own ways ; and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their calamities, and will bring upon them what they dread ; because, when I called, none did answer ; when I spake, they did not hear ; but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.

Hear the word of Jehovah, ye that revere his word ! Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, "Let Jehovah be glorified ;" but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.

A voice of tumult from the city ! A voice from the temple ! the voice of Jehovah rendering recompence to his enemies : "Before she hath travailed she bringeth forth ; before her pain cometh, she is delivered of a man-child." Who hath heard such a thing ? Who hath seen such things ? Shall the

earth be made to bring forth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she hath brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith Jehovah. Shall I give generation and shut the womb? saith thy God.

Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her! Rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourned for her; that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may draw out and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

FOR THUS SAITH JEHOVAH: Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like a flowing stream. And ye shall suck at the breast; ye shall be carried on her arm, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like the green herb; and the hand of Jehovah shall be made known to his servants, and his indignation to his enemies.

For, behold, Jehovah will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render back his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will Jehovah execute judgment on all flesh; and the slain of Jehovah shall be many. They that sanctify themselves and purify themselves in the gardens, following the rites of Achad in the midst, eating swine's flesh and what is abominable, and the mouse, shall perish together, saith Jehovah; for I know their works and their thoughts.

I come, to gather all nations and tongues ; and they shall come and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them ; and I will send of those that remain of them unto the nations ; to Tarshish, Pul and Lud that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the coasts afar off that have not heard my name, neither have seen my glory ; and they shall declare my glory among the nations.

And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto Jehovah, out of all nations, upon horses and in chariots and in litters, on mules and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith Jehovah ; as the children of Israel bring a meal-offering in a clean vessel into the house of Jehovah. And I will also take of them for priests and levites, saith Jehovah.

For, as the new heavens and the new earth which I make, shall remain before me, saith Jehovah ; so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before me, saith Jehovah. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me ; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched ; and they shall be an abhorrence unto all flesh.

CHAPTER IX.

HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH AND MALACHI.

THE first two of these prophets are mentioned in the book of Ezra (v. 1) as encouraging the Jews in Judea and Jerusalem in the second year of Darius (Hystaspis), king of Persia, when, after long opposition, by the Samaritans, to the work of rebuilding the temple, it was vigorously resumed and carried to its completion. This second year of Darius was about fourteen years after the return of the first body of patriots under Zerubbabel. The prophesying of Haggai and Zechariah are interspersed with short prose introductions (the chief historical memorials of the time, besides the book of Ezra) fully explanatory of the part which these two men took in urging forward the long delayed work. To this delay Haggai imputes the unprosperous state of the colony. He impresses us (as Zechariah does also in a somewhat less degree) with the feeling that there was among the returned exiles a saddened sense of disappointment, and also a half-heartedness for the realization of the destiny which they had believed to be in reserve for their nation. These much-needed remonstrances and exhortations had their effect, however. "The elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo; and they builded and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia."

(Ezra vi. 14.) About twenty years after the Return, the temple was completed and dedicated, as recorded in Ezra vi. 15—22. But nothing answerable to the Messiah's expected reign took place. These two prophets, like the Isaiah of the Return, must be produced in full. They are still hoping for something better than happened.

HAGGAI (B.C. 521.)

[Ch. i. 1.]

In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, came the word of the Eternal, by Haggai the prophet, unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high-priest, saying :

Thus speaketh the Eternal of hosts, saying :

This people have said, The time is not come, the time that the house of the Eternal should be built. But the word of the Eternal hath come by Haggai the prophet, saying : Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, while this house lieth waste ? Now therefore, thus saith the Eternal of hosts : Consider well your ways. Ye have sown much and bring in little ; ye eat, but ye have not enough ; ye drink, but not in plenty ; ye clothe yourselves, but not so as to warm you ; and he that earneth wages, earneth to put it into a purse with holes.

Thus saith the Eternal of hosts : Consider well your ways. Go up to the mountain and bring wood, and build the house ; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Eternal. Ye looked for much, and lo, it came to little ; and when ye brought it home, I did blow it away. And why ? saith the Eternal of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, while ye run every man unto his own house.

Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit ; and I called for a drought upon the land and upon the mountains ; and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth ; and upon men and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.

Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high-priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Eternal their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, because the Eternal their God had sent him ; and the people did fear before the Eternal. Then spake Haggai, the messenger of the Eternal, in the message of the Eternal unto the people, saying : "I am with you, saith the Eternal." And the Eternal stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high-priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people ; and they came and did work in the house of the Eternal of hosts their God, in the four-and-twentieth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

[Ch. ii. 1.]

In the seventh month, on the one-and-twentieth day of the month, came the word of the Eternal, by Haggai the prophet, saying : Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high-priest, and to the residue of the people, saying :

Who is left among you that saw this house in its first glory ? and how do ye see it now ? Is it not, in comparison to that, as nothing in your eyes ? Yet now, be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Eternal ;

and be strong, O Joshua son of Josedech, the high-priest ; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Eternal, and work ; for I am with you, saith the Eternal of hosts. According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you : fear ye not.

For thus saith the Eternal of hosts : Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea and the dry land. And I will shake all nations ; and the desirable things of all nations shall come ; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Eternal of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Eternal of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Eternal of hosts ; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Eternal of hosts.

[Ch. ii. 10.]

In the four-and-twentieth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the Eternal, by Haggai the prophet, saying : Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying : If one carry holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy ? And the priests answered and said, No.

Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these things, shall it be unclean ? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean.

Then answered Haggai the prophet and said : So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the Eternal ; and so is every work of their hands, and that which they offer there is unclean. And now I pray you, consider from this day and upward, from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the Eternal,—since those days were, when

one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten ; when one came to the wine-vat to draw out fifty vessels from the press, there were but twenty. I smote you with blight and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands ; yet ye turned not to me, saith the Eternal. Consider now from this day and upward, from this four-and-twentieth day of the ninth month, as far as from the day that the foundation of the temple of the Eternal was laid, consider it. Is there seed yet in the barn ? Even now the vine, and the fig-tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive-tree, hath not borne fruit. But from this day I will bless you.

[Ch. ii. 20.]

And again the word of the Eternal came unto Haggai on the four-and-twentieth day of the month, saying : Speak to Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, and say :

I will shake the heavens and the earth ; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms ; and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations ; and I will overthrow the chariots and those that ride in them ; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. In that day, saith the Eternal of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel my servant, son of Shealtiel, saith the Eternal ; and I will make thee as a signet-ring ; for I have chosen thee, saith the Eternal of hosts.

ZECHARIAH. (B.C. 521—519.)

[Ch. i. 1.]

In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the Eternal unto Zechariah the son of Barachiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying :

The Eternal was sore displeased with your fathers.

Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the Eternal of hosts: Turn ye unto me, saith the Eternal of hosts; and I will turn unto you, saith the Eternal of hosts. Be not ye as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets called, saying: Thus saith the Eternal of hosts, "Turn ye from your evil ways, and from your evil doings;" but they did not hear nor hearken unto me, saith the Eternal.

Your fathers! where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? But my words and my statutes which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers? so that they returned and said, Like as the Eternal of hosts thought to do unto us according to our ways and according to our doings, so hath He dealt with us.

[Ch. i. 7.]

On the four-and-twentieth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Sebat, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the Eternal unto Zechariah the son of Barachiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying:

I saw in the night, and behold! a man riding upon a red horse; and he stood among the myrtle-trees that were in the valley; and behind him were red horses, speckled and white. Then said I, O my lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these are. And the man that stood among the myrtle-trees answered and said: These are they whom Jehovah hath sent to walk to and fro upon the earth. And they answered the angel of the Eternal who stood among the myrtle-trees: We have walked to and fro through the earth, and behold, all the earth sitteth still and is at rest. Then the angel of the

Eternal answered and said : O Eternal of hosts, how long will thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these three-score and ten years ? And the Eternal answered the angel that talked with me, with good words and comfortable words. So the angel that communed with me said unto me : Proclaim thou and say :

Thus saith the Eternal of hosts : I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased with the nations that are at ease ; for when I was but a little displeased, they increased the affliction. Therefore thus saith the Eternal : I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies ; my house shall be rebuilt in it, saith the Eternal of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.

Proclaim again and say : Thus saith the Eternal of hosts, My cities shall again overflow with prosperity ; and the Eternal will again comfort Zion, and will again choose Jerusalem.

Then I lifted up mine eyes and saw, and behold four horns. And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these ? And he answered me : These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem. And the Eternal shewed me four workmen. Then I said : What come these to do ? And he spake, saying : Those are the horns which have scattered Judah so that no man did lift up his head ; but now these are come to affright them, to cast out the horns of the nations which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it.

I lifted up mine eyes again and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. Then I said, Whither goest thou ? And he said to me : To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof and what

is the length thereof. And behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, and said unto him : Run, speak to this young man, saying :

Jerusalem shall inhabit the villages, for the multitude of men and cattle within her. And I will be to her, saith the Eternal, a wall of fire round about, and will be her glory in the midst of her.

Ho, ho ! flee ye out of the land of the north, saith the Eternal ;* for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the Eternal. Ho, Zion, make thine escape, thou that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon. For thus saith the Eternal of hosts : For glory hath He sent me to the nations which spoiled you (for he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye). For, behold, I will shake mine hand over them, and they shall be a spoil to those that served them ; and ye shall know that the Eternal of hosts hath sent me.

Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion ! for lo ! I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Eternal. And many nations shall be joined to the Eternal in that day, and shall be my people ; and I will dwell in the midst of thee ; and thou shalt know that the Eternal of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the Eternal will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.

Be silent, O all flesh, before the Eternal ; for He hath risen up from his holy mountain.

[Ch. iii. 1.]

And he shewed me Joshua the high-priest standing

* This is plainly addressed to the captives still lingering in Babylon.

before the angel of the Eternal, and the Satan* standing at his right hand to accuse him. And [the angel of] the Eternal said to the Satan : Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan ; even Jehovah, who hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee ! Is not this man a brand plucked out of the fire ?

Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments as he stood before the angel. And he [the angel] answered and spake to those that stood before him, saying : Take away the filthy garments from him. And to him he said : Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with goodly apparel. Then he said : Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Eternal stood by. And the angel of the Eternal testified unto Joshua, saying :

Thus saith the Eternal of hosts : If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then shalt thou also rule over my house, and shalt also keep my courts ; and I will give thee access among these that stand by.

Hear now, O Joshua the high-priest ; thou and thy companions who sit before thee ; for they are men that are signs :

For behold ! I am bringing my servant THE BRANCH.†
For behold the stone which I have laid before Joshua. Upon this one stone shall seven eyes be fixed. Behold, I will sculpture the carving thereof, saith the Eternal of hosts ; and I will remove the iniquity of this land in one day.

In that day, saith the Eternal of hosts, ye shall invite

* The Satan, as in Job, is a kind of Inspector and Prosecutor-general in the Divine empire.

† See Is. xi. 1 ; Jer. xxiii. 5, *supra* (pp. 65, 82). Also Zech. vi. 12, *infra* (p. 192).

every man his neighbour under his vine and under his fig-tree.

And the angel that talked with me came again and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, and said unto me: What seest thou? And I said: I have looked, and behold! a lamp-stand all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and its seven lamps upon it, and seven pipes to the seven lamps which are upon the top of it: and two olive-trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side. And I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me: Knowest thou not what these are? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying:

This is the word of the Eternal unto Zerubbabel, saying: Not by might, nor by power [shall it be]; but by my spirit, saith the Eternal of hosts.

What art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain.

And he shall bring forth the headstone with shouts: Grace, grace unto it! [Blessing, blessing upon it!]

Moreover the word of the Eternal came unto me, saying: The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands also shall finish it. And thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? They shall even rejoice and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel. Those seven [lamps] are the eyes of the Eternal, which run to and fro through the whole earth. Then I answered and said unto him, What are these two olive-trees on the right side of the lamp-stand and on the left of it? And I answered again and said unto him, What are these two olive-branches, which, through the

two golden pipes, empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these are? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones* that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

Then I turned and lifted up mine eyes and looked, and behold, a book-roll flying. And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a book-roll flying; the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits. Then he said unto me:

This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth; for every one that stealeth shall be cut off from hence, according to it; and every one that sweareth [falsely] shall be cut off from hence, according to it. I have brought it forth, saith the Eternal of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name; and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.

Then the angel that talked with me went forth and said unto me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this that goeth forth. And I said, What is it? And he said, This is an Ephah [a bushel measure] that goeth forth. He said moreover, This is their iniquity in all the land. And behold, a talent of lead was lifted up, and a solitary woman was sitting in the midst of the ephah. And he said, This is the Wickedness. And he cast her into the midst of the ephah, and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof. Then I lifted up mine eyes, and behold, there came forth two women, and the wind was in their wings (for they had wings

* Literally, *sons of oil*, plainly meaning Zerubbabel and Joshua, the Prince and the High-priest.

like the wings of a stork); and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said to me, To build a house for it in the land of Shinar [Babylonia]; and it shall be established and set there upon its own base.

And again I lifted up mine eyes and looked, and behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. To the first chariot were red horses, and to the second chariot black horses, and to the third chariot white horses, and to the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses. Then I spake, and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said unto me, "These are the four winds [or Spirits] of heaven, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country; and the white go forth after them; and the grisled go forth towards the south country." And the bay went forth and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth; for he had said, Go, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth. Then cried he unto me, and spake to me, saying: Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my indignation in the north country.*

[Ch. vi. 9.]

And the word of the Eternal came unto me, saying: Receive from them of the captivity, even from Heldai,

* Assyria was so called; then Babylon less properly; now Persia, which included both. So, in Zech. ii. 6, the remaining exiles are invited to come from the north. The next vision implies that some had lately arrived from Babylon.

from Tobijah and from Jedaiah (and go thou this same day, and go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, whither they are come from Babylon)—receive [from them] silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech the high-priest, and speak to him, saying :

Thus speaketh the Eternal of hosts, saying : Behold, there is a man whose name is THE BRANCH ; and he shall branch forth from his place, and he shall build the temple of the Eternal. Even he shall build the temple of the Eternal ; and he shall receive majesty, and shall sit and rule upon his throne. And there shall be a priest by his throne ; and the counsel of peace shall be between the two. And the crowns shall be for Helem,* and for Tobijah, and for Jedaiah, and for Hen† the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the Eternal. And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Eternal ; and ye shall know that the Eternal of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the Eternal, your God.

[Ch. vii. 1.]

And it came to pass, in the fourth year of king Darius, that the word of the Eternal came unto Zechariah in the fourth day of the ninth month, even in Chisleu ; when they had sent Sherezer and Regemmelech and their men unto the house of God, to pray before the Eternal, and to speak unto the priests who were in the house of the Eternal of hosts, saying : Shall I weep in

* Either another name for Heldai in ver. 10, or probably an error of transcription.

† Seemingly another name for Josiah in ver. 10.

the fifth* month, separating myself, as I have done so many years ? Then came the word of the Eternal of hosts unto me, saying :

Speak unto all the people of the land and to the priests, saying : When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and the seventh month,* even those seventy years, did ye fast at all to me, even to me ? And when ye did eat and when ye did drink, did ye not eat for yourselves and drink for yourselves ? Are not these the words which Jehovah hath proclaimed by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and her cities round about her, and when the south and the plain were inhabited ?

And the word of the Eternal came unto Zechariah, saying : Thus spake the Eternal of hosts, saying : Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassion, every one to his brother ; and oppress not the widow and the fatherless, the stranger and the poor ; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

But they refused to hearken, and turned a stubborn shoulder, and stopped their ears that they might not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the Law, and the words which the Eternal of hosts sent by his Spirit by the former prophets.

Therefore came great wrath from the Eternal of hosts ;

* The fast of the fifth month was kept in commemoration of the burning of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar (see Jerem. lii. 13) ; that of the seventh in memory of the murder of Gedaliah (see Jerem. xli. 2). In the eighth chapter of this prophet Zechariah (ver. 19), two other fasts of the captivity are named : that of the fourth month for the breaking down of the walls of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and that of the tenth for the beginning of the siege. (Jer. lii. 4—7.)

and it came to pass that as I called and they would not hear, so they cried and I would not hear, saith the Eternal of hosts. But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not ; and the land was left desolate behind them, without a traveller or an inhabitant ; and they made a desirable land desolate.

[Ch. viii. 1.]

And the word of the Eternal of hosts came, saying :
Thus saith the Eternal of hosts : I have been jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and with great wrath have I been jealous for her.

Thus saith the Eternal : I am returned to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth ; and the mountain of the Eternal of hosts a holy mountain.

Thus saith the Eternal of hosts : There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, every one with his staff in his hand for very age ; and the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.

Thus saith the Eternal of hosts : If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes ? saith the Eternal of hosts.

Thus saith the Eternal of hosts : Lo, I will save my people from the land of the rising and from the land of the setting sun ; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.

Thus saith the Eternal of hosts : Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words by

the mouth of the prophets, which were spoken in the day that the foundation of the house of the Eternal of hosts was laid, that the temple might be built. For, before these days, there were no wages for man, nor any hire for beast; neither was there any security to him that went out or came in, because of the enemy; for I set all men every one against his neighbour.

But now, I will not be unto the remnant of this people as in the former days, saith the Eternal of hosts. For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel; so I will save you, and ye shall be a blessing. Fear not; but let your hands be strong.

For thus saith the Eternal of hosts: As I thought to punish you when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the Eternal of hosts, and I repented not; so have I thought again in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not.

These are the things that ye shall do: Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; judge truth and the judgment of peace in your gates; and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath; for all these are things that I hate, saith the Eternal.

And the word of the Eternal of hosts came unto me, saying: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the

fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah for joy and gladness, and cheerful festivals. But love ye truth and peace.

Thus saith the Eternal of hosts : It shall yet come to pass, that nations shall come, and the inhabitants of many cities ; and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying : "Let us go speedily to pray before the Eternal, and to seek the Eternal of hosts : I also will go." Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Eternal of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Eternal.

Thus saith the Eternal of hosts : In those days, ten men of all languages of the nations shall take hold, yea, shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, "We will go with you ; for we have heard that God is with you."

These words end the eighth chapter of the book of Zechariah. The rest of the book (as explained in Chapter IV. p. 71) belongs to a much earlier date.

We are here, then, under the guidance of Haggai and the later Zechariah, admitted to the confidence of the zealous Jews returned from Babylon, down to about seventeen years after the edict of Cyrus. The appeals of these two prophets were the means of quickening, and in a few more years bringing to its completion, the work of rebuilding the temple. But a feeling of prevailing sadness arises in reading their pages. How weak and spiritless the returned colony seems ! How indifferent are the multitudes of Jews who remain in Babylon, Assyria and the rest of the Persian empire, to the call of patriotism and of their Messianic hope ! What tones of disappointment, sadness and shame, what severe words of remonstrance and reproof, fall from these earnest advisers ! How they seem

to hope against hope, and call upon their compatriots in vain! How little active even the BRANCH himself, Prince Zerubbabel, seems! He is little more than a name, a cipher, in this history; the lineal representative of the fallen house of David, but seemingly a man of little or no personal activity, zeal or prowess. He does not stand forth before us as one destined to build up the fallen Jewish monarchy, with or without its Messianic accompaniments.

And how, humanly speaking, could he do this, whatever might be his ability and zeal? It does not appear likely that Cyrus (the human instrument of the restoration of the Jews to their land) intended to promote, or that he or any of his successors on the Persian throne would have allowed, the re-establishment of an independent monarchy in Judea. Yet this was certainly implied in the Jewish Messianic hope. In point of fact, from the time of the Babylonish exile, the Jews never again became an independent people. To the Persian sway succeeded that of Alexander; and then of Syria and Egypt under his successors; till Rome subdued all. The Messiah could not come as a temporal monarch. Providence had not made room for such a Messiah. But the new Judaism of the Return, as represented in these prophets, is evidently growing in spirituality, and is characterized by a severe and earnest moral tone, though it still includes the Mosaic rites and sacrifices. It also distinctly anticipates the reception of men of all nations into its community, and is full of religious and benevolent hope.

MALACHI, the only remaining prophet of the Return, adds little to this picture, but confirms, after the interval of about eighty more years, the impression of deep national disappointment already derived from the Jewish historians

and prophets of the period. A second band of Jewish captives returned with Ezra, after a delay more than equal to another seventy years' captivity; and a third, under Nehemiah, the cup-bearer of Artaxerxes Longimanus, about twelve years after that under Ezra. Nehemiah administered the government of Judea twelve years, and under him the city walls of Jerusalem were at length rebuilt. Modern criticism confirms the ancient opinion which placed Malachi in the time of Nehemiah. This prophet's appeals have reference to two prominent evils to which that governor's administration was directed, namely, the neglect of temple offerings and the marriage of heathen wives. And it is also observed that Malachi (i. 8) speaks of the *Governor* in terms inappropriate to any later period than that of Nehemiah, after whom the functions of government were united with the High-priesthood.

His burdens are as follows (about B.C. 440):

[Ch. i. 1.]

The burden of the word of the Eternal to Israel by
Malachi:

I have loved you, saith the Eternal. Yet ye say,
Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's
brother? saith the Eternal. Yet I loved Jacob, and
I hated Esau; and I made his mountains a waste,
and his inheritance a dwelling for jackals of the
wilderness.

Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we
will build again the desolate places; thus saith the
Eternal of hosts: They shall build, but I will throw
down; and they shall be called, The border of
wickedness, and, The people against whom the
Eternal hath indignation for ever. And your eyes
shall see, and ye shall say, The Eternal will be mag-
nified beyond the border of Israel.

A son knoweth his father, and a servant his master. If then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Eternal of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye bring polluted bread to mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the Eternal is contemptible. And when ye bring the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And when ye bring the lame and sick, is it not evil? Offer it now to thy Governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Eternal of hosts.

And now, I pray you, entreat the face of God that He may be gracious unto us. This hath been done by your own hands. Will He be favourable to you? saith the Eternal of hosts.

Oh that some one among you would shut the [temple] doors, that ye may not kindle fire on mine altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, saith the Eternal of hosts, neither will I accept a meal-offering at your hand.

For, from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the nations; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the nations, saith the Eternal of hosts.

But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the Eternal is polluted, and the fruit thereof, even its meat, is contemptible. Ye also say, Behold, what a weariness it is! And ye have snuffed at it, saith the Eternal of hosts; and ye bring the torn, and the lame, and the sick. And thus ye have

brought the meal-offering. Should I accept this at your hand ? saith the Eternal.

But cursed be the deceiver who hath a male in his flock and voweth it, and then sacrificeth to the Eternal a corrupt thing ; for I am a great King, saith the Eternal of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the nations.

[Ch. ii. 1.]

And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you : If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory to my name, saith the Eternal of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings. Yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.

Behold, I will rebuke your seed,* and scatter dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts ;† and ye shall be carried away with it. And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment to you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the Eternal of hosts. My covenant of life and peace was with him ; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.

The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips. He walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and men should seek the Law from his mouth ; for he is the messenger of the Eternal of hosts.

But ye have departed out of the way ; ye have caused many to stumble at the Law ; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Eternal of hosts. There-

* The meal-offerings, apparently. † Of the animal offerings.

fore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in administering the Law.

[Ch. ii. 10.]

Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously each against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers? Judah hath dealt treacherously; and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the Holy Place of the Eternal which He loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. The Eternal will cut off the man that doeth this, both the master and the scholar,* out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth a meal-offering to the Eternal of hosts. And this also ye do: ye cover the altar of the Eternal with tears, with weeping and with groans,† so that He no more regardeth the offering, nor receiveth it with good-will at your hand. Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Eternal is a witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously. Yet she is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did He not make [the two] one flesh? and is there not one spirit thereto? And what doth He seek? A godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and be not unfaithful to the wife of thy youth. For I hate him

* Or, magistrate and people (Grotius): literally, *him that watcheth and him that answereth*, a phrase for all men without exception.

† “The tears and groans of wives divorced by priests, or referring to them for decision.” “Divorces seem to have been multiplied for the purpose of contracting these prohibited marriages.” (Newcome.)

that putteth away, saith the Eternal, the God of Israel; and him that covereth violence with his garment, saith the Eternal of hosts; therefore take heed to your spirit and deal not unfaithfully.*

Ye have wearied the Eternal with your words; yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied Him? In that ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Eternal, and He delighteth in them. Or [ye say], Where is the God of judgment?

Behold, I will send my messenger,† and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in. Behold, he shall come, saith the Eternal of hosts.

But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? For he will be like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Eternal an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant to the Eternal, as in the days of old, as in former years. And I will come near to you to judgment; and I

* An allusion probably to Genesis ii. 24, "they shall be one flesh." The passage is obscure, and various conjectures have been proposed. Newcome suggests another translation: "And did not One make [us]? (see ver. 10). And hath he the residue of the spirit? And what doth the One [God] seek? A holy seed." Some take the *One* to mean Abraham;—"the One (our great ancestor) did not do so." But Newcome prefers transposing the Hebrew, and brings out the translation above adopted in the text.

† "My messenger" in Heb. is *Malachi*; whence some consider the prophet to be meant in this verse. Some take the word in the title of the book to be not a personal name, but the official designation of an anonymous teacher,—*my messenger*, or *my angel*.

will be a swift witness against sorcerers, and against adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Eternal of hosts. For I am the Eternal ; I change not ; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

From the days of your fathers ye have gone away from mine ordinances and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return to you, saith the Eternal of hosts.

But ye say : Wherein shall we return ? Shall man rob God ? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say : Wherein have we robbed thee ? In tithes and in heave-offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house ; and prove me now herewith, saith the Eternal of hosts, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing till there be not room enough. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground ; neither shall your vine be barren in the field, saith the Eternal of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed ; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Eternal of hosts.

Your words have been stout against me, saith the Eternal ; yet ye say : "What have we spoken against thee ?" Ye have said : "It is vain to serve God ; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Eternal of hosts ? Therefore we call the proud happy. Yea, they that work wickedness are built up. Yea, they that tempt God are even delivered."

[Ch. iii. 16.]

Then they that feared the Eternal spake often one to another; and the Eternal hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Eternal and that thought upon his name.

And they shall be mine, saith the Eternal of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasure; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye again discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.

For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud and all that do wickedly shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Eternal of hosts, so that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and thrive as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be as dust under the soles of your feet, in the day when I shall do this, saith the Eternal of hosts.

Remember ye the Law of Moses my servant, which I commanded him in Horeb concerning all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

Behold, I will send to you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and terrible day of Jehovah. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse.*

* Probably the last six Psalms (cxlv.—cl.) belong, like many others, to the period following the return from Babylon. But they contain no *Messianic* allusions.

CHAPTER X.

THE MESSIANIC EXPRESSIONS IN DANIEL AND THE APOCRYPHA.

UNDER the guidance of Ezra and Nehemiah and the last three prophets of the Old Testament, we have followed the course of Messianic belief, hope and effort, down to nearly a hundred years after the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon. To this restoration the most earnest and religious spirits among them, including the Isaiah of the Return, had confidently looked for the establishment of their Messiah's temporal kingdom. But the hope was sadly disappointed. Nothing of the kind occurred. Zerubbabel (so far as appears) did not presume to call himself Messiah, and left no personal mark on the history. The return of the nation to their land under him as their Prince, historically viewed, is a picture of national weakness and religious disappointment. We read this in all the prophets of the time: in proportion to their earnestness is their evident sadness.

Yet the Jewish hope survived. And not only so, but it became purified, and was diffused abroad through other nations, to concentrate itself in due time upon a far more conspicuous period of the world's history, in which the leading personage distinctly claimed to have fulfilled it in its best and most spiritual import, while altogether reject-

ing the temporal hope. This somewhat obscure interval is now our subject of inquiry.

The outward history of the Jews in Palestine, from their return under the edict of Cyrus to the Christian era, is briefly this :—

The great majority having stayed behind in Babylon and other parts of the Persian empire (where, no doubt, the influence of their pure theology must have been great, though their history is little known), those who had returned were, by permission of the Persian kings, governed by their own officers from Zerubbabel to Nehemiah ; paying tribute, however, to the Persian kingdom and subject to its policy. After the time of Nehemiah, Palestine became part of the satrapy of Syria, and the High-priest was made the local governor, with no very satisfactory results in an administrative point of view. The Jews remained faithful to the Persian government till it fell under Alexander's power, B.C. 331. On his death, in 324, and the division of his conquests among his generals, Judea fell to the Syrian kingdom ; but it was presently conquered by Ptolemy of Egypt ; and by him and his successors the Jews were generally treated with indulgence. But the family of Seleucus, having gained possession of Syria, B.C. 312, contended with the Ptolemies for the sovereignty of Judea, and the Jews were the sufferers. Under Antiochus Epiphanes (who reigned from B.C. 175 to 164) they were dreadfully persecuted, their worship was stopped and the temple profaned. At this period the heroic resistance of the Maccabee family took place ; and they founded a new Jewish monarchy. But the great Roman power already hovered near ; and Pompey brought Judea into subjection as part of the province of Syria, B.C. 66. It became a separate Roman province, A.D. 8.

The religious importance of this series of events has been well described in the following terms :

"The interval between the Captivity and the birth of Christ was not only fertile in critical combinations of different elements, but ample space was given for each to work its full effect. For two centuries after the Captivity, the Jews grew up under the dominion of Persia; for about a century and a half they were under Greek rulers; for a century they enjoyed independence under the Hasmonæan princes; and for more than half a century* Rome was supreme through the government of her instruments. Or, if we include the Captivity, it may be said that for three hundred years the spirit of the East was dominant in Judæa, to be followed, for a like period, by the spirit of the West."†

The importance of this period is seen in the modifications which Judaism underwent, and in the diffusion of its principles beyond the nation itself. The returned captives were not the whole nation, nor indeed more than a small part of it. But in ceasing to be one people politically, the Jews henceforth formed, in all the various places where they were settled, one Religion (or, as some have expressed it, one Church), looking to Jerusalem as its centre. Their tendency to idolatry was intirely cured from that time; and their Monotheism became less ceremonial than before. In the wars of the Maccabees, having suffered a cruel massacre unresistingly on the sabbath, they learnt thenceforth to exercise the right of defensive war even on that day. The court of the Gentiles was, in the spirit of the prophets of the Return, added to the other courts of the Temple; and synagogues for worship without sacrifice (which could only be offered at Jerusalem) were established throughout the land and wherever else Jews resided. The reading of the Scriptures formed a constant part of the service of the synagogue, and their study was earnestly promoted. In

* For nearly a century, if we reckon to the opening of Christ's ministry, instead of his birth.

† Westcott's *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, pp. 47, 48.

the silence of living prophecy, the written books of the prophets of former days were collected and studied, in addition to the histories and the devotional and moral books of the Old Testament. The canon of the Old Testament (that is, the list, catalogue or collection of admitted books) took its present form during this period.

It is well understood that the Jews, on their return from Persia, brought with them a more decided belief in a Future State than they had before held;—partly as the reasoning result of the perceived want of such thorough retribution in the present life as would have answered to their belief in the justice and holiness of God, and partly as derived from the prevailing belief in immortality among the Persians. They had also learnt the Persian belief in angels, and in a Satan as the spirit of Evil. The scenery of Daniel's visions is filled with angelic beings, the chief of whom have names.

To this period most of the books of the Apocrypha (or Greek Jewish Scriptures) belong, having been principally written, it would seem, in Alexandria. There is little in them to mark any decided progress in the Messianic idea (which seems to have been nursed vaguely and in secret during this period), the time of the Maccabees being that in which it chiefly found expression. To this same period the production of the Chaldee book of Daniel is also ascribed by the general voice of criticism.* To the Messianic expressions in Daniel and the Apocrypha, therefore, we now turn. And we take those of the book of Daniel first.

* To our present purpose the precise age of this book is not of supreme importance. It represents the Messianic idea at *one* period or at *another*. I place it, of course, where I believe it historically to belong. The English reader may see the critical question as to its date fully stated in De Wette's *Introduction to the Old Testament*, and somewhat feebly combated in the older *Translation of Daniel*, by Thomas Wintle, B.D.

DANIEL.

By the common consent of interpreters, though with some diversity on points of minor detail, the visions in this book are understood to describe the succession of the great empires of the world known as the Babylonian, the Persian, the Greek under Alexander, with its four divisions under his successors, and last (in the general opinion) the Roman. The grievous oppression of the Jews by the Syrian king Antiochus, who (B.C. 168) put a stop to their religious worship, and defiled their temple by sacrificing a swine and setting up a statue of Jupiter in it, forms a prominent subject in most of these visions; and the establishment of a divine kingdom by "the Ancient of Days," delegating his authority to "one like a Son of Man" and to "the Saints of the Most High," is declared to be at hand. Both a "Messiah prince" who has been concerned in the restoration of Jerusalem, and another "Messiah" who shall be cut off, are distinctly spoken of. The whole series is, in abstract, as follows (chap. i. being simply narrative):

Chap. ii. contains Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's interpretation of it. The great image which the king saw had a head of gold (denoting Nebuchadnezzar himself, or the Babylonian power); its breast and arms were of silver (denoting the Persian that would next follow it); the thighs of brass (the Grecian); the legs of iron and feet of iron mixed with clay (the Roman, or else, as some think, the Syrian and Egyptian kingdoms under the Seleucids and the Ptolemies). Then it is added that "a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces; * * * and the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." The stone is thus interpreted:

[Ch. ii. 44.]

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven

set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed ; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people ; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever ; forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold.

Grotius and many others of the older critics take this stone to be the Roman power, considering it, however, as typical also of the Gospel in its small beginning and vast growth. But the natural interpretation of the words, from the Jewish point of view (at whatever time we believe them to have been written) is, that the temporal Messianic kingdom should be established on the subversion of the others. If the kingdom of iron and clay is interpreted to mean the Seleucid and Ptolemaic dynasties, the hope of the Messiah's advent at that time, however natural to the Jews, was again disappointed. If it is taken to mean the Roman power, then indeed it is true that the Messiah's kingdom, in its spiritual and Christian sense (but not in the Jewish), did arise when that power was beginning to shew signs of disruption. According to the mode of investigation here adopted, it is enough if we can shew what the Jewish seer meant and hoped or believed, without also proving that his hope was realized to the letter, when in so many cases already a similar hope had been "disappointed still and still believed."

The next passage of this kind occurs in connection with the description of a Fourth Beast with ten horns (which, with the three preceding, evidently symbolizes the same succession of empires as the Great Image in the king's dream). Among the ten horns "there came up another little horn, before whom three of the first horns were

plucked up by the roots ; and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things" (vii. 8). This little horn, grown so great, is generally understood to mean Antiochus Epiphanes ; and the three that he plucked up may have been his elder brother Seleucus, Seleucus's son Demetrius, and Ptolemy Philopator, whom he drove out of Syria. To identify all the ten horns were useless, as it is impossible. The description of an approaching divine kingdom follows :

[Ch. vii. 9.]

I beheld, till thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days [or, an aged person] took his seat : his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool ; his throne was flames of fire, and his wheels a burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him ; thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him ; the Tribunal sat and the books were opened. I looked then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake ; I looked even till the Beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away ; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.

I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like a Son of Man* came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations and languages should serve him ; his dominion is

* A *Son of Man*, in Ezekiel, denotes a prophet, one devoted to human kind. Here surely it is the Messiah receiving his kingdom.

an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one which shall not be destroyed. I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things : “These great beasts which are four, are four kings which shall rise out of the earth. But the saints* of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.”

Then I would know the truth concerning the Fourth Beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron and his nails of brass ; which devoured, brake in pieces and stamped the residue with his feet ; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other horn which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn which had eyes and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I looked ; and the same horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High ; and the time came that the saints should possess the kingdom. Thus he said :

“The Fourth Beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth [land ?], and shall tread it down and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise ; and another shall rise after them, and he

* Or holy ones, or holy people of the Most High.

shall be diverse from the first and shall subdue three kings. And he will speak great words against the Most High, and will wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws. And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the half of a time [three years and a half]. But the Tribunal shall sit; and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. And all dominions shall serve and obey it."

All this seems, in the natural meaning of language, to express the fervent Jewish hope of a coming temporal Messianic kingdom. The persecution of the Jewish nation and the suspension of their worship by Antiochus becomes, as it were, the centre of the prophet's observation, and he endeavours to make it the centre of hope instead of despair.

The little horn becomes exceedingly great in the next chapter (viii.), which details another but similar vision :

[Ch. viii. 9.]

And out of one of them [the four horns of Alexander's successors] came forth a Little Horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land [Judea]. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place

of his sanctuary was cast down. And an army was sent forth against the daily sacrifice for transgression ; and it cast down the truth to the ground, and went on and prospered.

Then I heard one saint speaking ; and another saint said unto the one which had spoken :

“ How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of the desolator, that both the sanctuary and its host [the temple-servants] shall be trampled under foot ? ”

And he said unto me : “ Unto two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings ; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”*

The same persecuting king is further described and his end announced in the following terms :

[Ch. viii. 23.]

When the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance and cunning in artifices shall arise. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power ;† and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and go forwards, and shall destroy mighty ones and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand ; and he shall magnify himself in his heart,

* 2300 mornings and evenings might mean that number of days ; or, by adding mornings and evenings together, it might mean just half the number, or 1150 days. In ch. xii., the time specified is 1290 days ; and also “ a time, times and half a time,” which is taken to mean $3\frac{1}{2}$ years (a year, two years and half a year). According to Josephus, the violation of the temple lasted $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, which (if reckoned as years of 12 months, 30 days each) would make 1260 days. I doubt whether rigid arithmetical accuracy is intended, or ought to be looked for, in these utterances. Proximate, or round, numbers are used.

† Through the divisions of the Jews, probably.

and shall destroy many while at peace with him. He shall also stand up against the prince of princes;* but he shall be broken without hand.†

In chapter ix., Daniel, in reply to his prayer for the restoration of the Jews, which he thinks (from Jeremiah's prophecy of seventy years) must be near at hand, is thus addressed by the angel Gabriel, in terms which have sorely exercised the commentators :

[Ch. ix. 24.]

Seventy weeks [of years, = 490 years] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression and to seal up sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the holy of holies [the most holy place of the temple]. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the word that Jerusalem should again be built until an anointed prince [or, a Prince Messiah], seven weeks [are, have been, or shall be] and sixty-two weeks, it shall be rebuilt both street and moat, though in troublous times.‡ And after the sixty-two weeks shall Messiah be cut off and nothing shall be left to him. And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. And the end thereof shall be with a flood ; and unto the

* Generally supposed to mean the High-priest.

† Without human agency or visible power. The death of Antiochus was sudden and involved in mystery.

‡ The meaning here depends much upon punctuation, which is optional to the translator, there being no such thing in the original. A stop after *seven weeks* will make one period ; after *sixty-two weeks*, quite a different period.

end of the war desolations are appointed. And he will confirm a covenant with many for one week;* but in the midst of the week he will cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the battlement [of the temple] shall be the abominations of desolation, even until the consummation, and [till] that which is determined shall be poured upon the desolator.

The interpretation of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel seems to defy critical skill, if we may judge by the little success of those who have attempted it, in every conceivable way, upon the assumption that they must find its exact fulfilment in history. Dr. Priestley, unable to find it in the past, was disposed to think it remained still, in great part, to be realized. And probably many others have thought so. Many have endeavoured to find the fulfilment in the Pope, Mahomet or Napoleon.

But there is another and simpler way of looking at the matter, which makes it unnecessary to find an exact historical fulfilment, namely: to regard these prophecies as the natural and earnest expression of the Jewish national and religious hope, so often already disappointed, and now (if the composition of the book of Daniel is rightly referred to the time of the Maccabees) struggling to sustain itself against the horrors of persecution under Antiochus. Even on this principle, indeed, of letting the writer express what he means, without feeling bound to shew its actual fulfilment, it is not easy to be sure of his meaning. The proper translation even is doubtful at almost every step. But there are certain leading ideas on which we can hardly misunderstand him.

* For Antiochus's broken league, see Josephus, *Antiq.* B. xii. ch. v. 3, 4.

He plainly says, the Seventy years of Jeremiah's prophecy must be extended to Seventy *weeks of years* (490 years) as destined to elapse before bringing in perpetual righteousness under the divine kingdom and anointing the Holy of Holies. Here is the sad consciousness of hope deferred. He still believes in the national hope; but he knows and feels that it has not been fulfilled as had been expected. So he concludes that seventy years may mean seventy times seven.

But his phraseology is perplexing when, in the next verse, he reckons his weeks "from the going forth of the word to rebuild Jerusalem." It might seem most natural to take this *word* as the decree of Cyrus; but it may (and in consistency with the general idea of extending the 70 years into 70×7 , it *must*) be taken rather as marking the *beginning* of the captivity, when (and indeed before which) we must remember that the restoration had been promised by the word of Jehovah through Jeremiah, as appointed to happen after seventy years of exile. The meaning therefore seems to be, that the seventy years beginning with the exile must be now interpreted as extended to seventy times seven. Alas! poor expectants of a temporal Messianic age! But, faithful to the idea, many of the Jews devoutly expect it still in this 19th century.

The writer then seems (at first sight) to divide these seventy weeks into seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one remaining week, in the middle of which last the daily sacrifice and oblation would cease. There can be little doubt that this means the period of the violation of the Jewish temple by the Syrian king Antiochus. Its service was restored after about three years, through the prowess of Judas Maccabeus, B.C. 165; in which year also Antiochus died—in part at least through vexation. But reckoning back 490 years from 165 would make 655 B.C. as the

beginning of the period; whereas B.C. 599 is the understood beginning of the Babylonish captivity, as reckoned from king Zedekiah's capture, or 606 if reckoned back to the payment of tribute to Babylon in Jehoiakim's reign. So the writer seems not to reckon his seven weeks and sixty-two consecutively, but to count each period from the beginning of the exile. If this is his meaning, then he says it had been forty-nine years (or seven weeks) from the captivity to the appearance of a Messiah Prince, and would be 434 years (or sixty-two weeks of years) from the same period to a Messiah being cut off, the sanctuary defiled and the offering suspended. Does this Messiah mean a *succession* of anointed rulers? Can the first mentioned be Zerubbabel the destined leader? or can he be Cyrus fast growing in power? or the Isaiah of the Return, exhorting for twenty years in preparation for the event? Can the last be Mattathias, or his heroic son Judas Maccabeus? Or is Messiah the personified Jewish people itself; or its priestly head? The interpretation is full of perplexity on any scheme; and it is wisest to confess that half the difficulties are unsolved. But the general meaning is plainly that of disappointed hope taking hold of a new period; that period the profanation and recovery of the Temple. Now 434 years (sixty-two weeks) counted back from B.C. 165, the date of Antiochus's death, would make B.C. 599, the very year of Zedekiah's captivity; and one more week of years would take us up to Jehoiakim's becoming tributary. Perhaps this reconciliation of dates is too good to be true. I do not rely upon it; I even doubt it for its seeming exactness. I know how many elements of doubt there are in all such calculations; and I do not think the writer himself need be regarded as having framed his theory of seventy weeks of years with arithmetical nicety, but upon the principle of round numbers which happened to

fit pretty nearly at any rate. We must remember, too, that the number 7 with its multiples was a sacred, if not mystical, number among the Hebrews. I should therefore be equally disposed to the same interpretation if I could not come right within a few years by my addition of dates. May we not be satisfied with the general meaning, in which the heart of the matter consists ? The seventy years, though terminating the exile, had not been followed by a Messianic kingdom. They are therefore extended into seventy *weeks of years*; and these are resolved into seven weeks for the Messiah's appearing, and sixty-two for his being cut off; the addition of which numbers would (after the Hebrew mode of counting) run into the seventieth week and be called seventy weeks. Yet the seven weeks and the sixty-two are not consecutive, but contemporaneous to the end of the former. It is manifestly an accommodation of prophecy on the part of the writer, an extension of time because the time previously understood has not brought the fulfilment hoped for; and we should do wrong to assume that this new period was more prophetically exact than the first had proved.

The last three chapters of Daniel contribute little more to a distinct view of the Messianic expectation. In the form of vision the leading topics of the previous chapters are repeated, with many added details respecting the Syrian and the Egyptian sway over Judea. As before, the vision ends with Antiochus, whose mad atrocities are again mentioned (which earned him the name of Epimanes, *madman*, in place of Epiphanes, *illustrious*, as his courtiers called him). Yet, it is added, "he shall come to his end, and none shall help him;" and the opening of a better age is expected to ensue :

[Ch. xii. 1.]

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince who standeth up for the children of thy people; and though there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time, yet at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

But thou, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book even to the time of the end. Many shall then search diligently, and knowledge shall be increased.

We cannot fail to notice here the introduction of the idea, which grew afterwards into more distinctness, that the opening of the Messiah's kingdom should be attended or heralded by a resurrection of the dead (perhaps of faithful Hebrews only), and a retributory sentence upon them for their previous lives. "The wise" are to inherit everlasting life in that kingdom.

One person in the vision inquires of another, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" and receives the reply, that "In a time, times and a half, and when the dispersion of the power of the holy people shall be at an end, all these things shall be accomplished."

Then Daniel in his own person asks: "O, my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" and the book concludes with this announcement:

[Ch. xii. 9.]

Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and

sealed till the end of the time. Many shall be cleansed and made white and purified; but the wicked will still do wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand; but the wise will understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and thirty-five days! But go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and shall stand up in thy lot at the end of the days.

Here, almost as in ch. viii. 14, the time to elapse till the cleansing of the temple is given as $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, or 1290 days; and the blessing of waiting to 1335 days (or 45 days longer) is understood to mark the death of Antiochus, which happened very soon after the recovery of the temple by Judas Maccabeus.*

On the whole, there can scarcely be a practical doubt that the Maccabean period is that upon which the prophecies of Daniel converge, and in which the book was mainly written; a period of severe national calamity, in connection with which the ever active religious hope of the Hebrew people rises out of oppression into new confidence inspiring heroism. Never was faith more profound than theirs. The Messianic hope "springs eternal in the *Hebrew* breast."

1 AND 2 MACCABEES.

The books of the Maccabees furnish a few illustrations of our subject. The first book is the most ancient history

* See Josephus, *Ant.* B. xii. ch. ix.

we have of the times which its title suggests. The second is not a continuation, but a series of additions and enlargements less in the sober style of history. The first is thought to be of Palestinian authorship, the second African. The expectation of a coming prophet is twice expressed in the first book. The first occasion is when Judas cleanses the sanctuary :

[1 Macc. iv. 42—46.]

So he chose priests of blameless conversation, such as had pleasure in the law; who cleansed the sanctuary, and bare out the defiled stones into an unclean place. And when as they consulted what to do with the altar of burnt offerings which was profaned, they thought it best to pull it down, lest it should be a reproach to them, because the heathen had defiled it: wherefore they pulled it down, and laid up the stones in the mountain of the temple, in a convenient place, *until there should come a prophet* to shew what should be done with them.

In the second passage, Simon Maccabeus is appointed governor and high-priest provisionally, under the same hope or expectation :

[Ch. xiv. 41.]

The Jews and priests were well pleased that Simon should be their governor and high-priest for ever (in perpetuity), *until there should arise a faithful prophet.*

In the second book, which opens in the form of a letter from the Jews in Judea to those in Egypt, inviting them to keep the feast of the new dedication of the temple, the national hope is repeated in these words :

[2 Macc. ii. 17, 18.]

We hope also that the God who delivered all his people, and gave them all an heritage, and the kingdom, and the priesthood, and the sanctuary, as He promised in the law, *will shortly have mercy upon us and gather us together out of every land under heaven into the holy place; for He hath delivered us out of great troubles and hath purified the place.*

And, in what one must hope is an exaggerated account of the martyrdoms of a woman and her seven sons by the mad Epiphanes, we have these expressions of religious confidence as uttered by them,—which illustrate rather the growing belief in a future life than in the coming prophet, except so far as the ideas of the future life and the Messianic kingdom on earth were associated (as before observed in Daniel) :

[Ch. vii. 9—.]

Thou, like a fury, takest us out of the present life; but the King of the world shall raise us up, who have died for his laws, unto everlasting life. * * * These (said one, stretching out his hands to be cut off) I had from Heaven; and for his laws I despise them; and from Him I hope to receive them again. * * * It is good (said another), being put to death by men, to look for hope from God, to be raised up again by Him: as for thee, thou shalt have no resurrection to life. * * * Then looked he (the fifth brother) unto the king and said: Thou hast power over men; thou art corruptible; thou doest what thou wilt; yet think not that our nation is forsaken of God; but abide awhile and behold his great power, how He will torment thee and thy seed. * * * (And the mother is represented as saying to them): I

neither gave you breath nor life, neither was it I that formed the members of every one of you; but doubtless the Creator of the world, who formed the generation of man and found out the beginning of all things, will also of his own mercy give you breath and life again, as ye now regard not your own selves for his laws' sake. * * * (To the youngest still surviving she says): Fear not this tormentor; but, being worthy of thy brethren, take thy death, that I may receive thee again in mercy with thy brethren. * * * (And the young man says to the tyrant): Our brethren, who have now suffered a short pain, are dead under God's covenant of everlasting life; but thou, through the judgment of God, shalt receive just punishment for thy pride. But I, as my brethren, offer up my body and life for the laws of our fathers, beseeching God that He would speedily be merciful unto our nation.

ECCLESIASTICUS (or, The Wisdom of the Son of Sirach)

Was originally written in Hebrew, and translated into Greek in Alexandria 230 or 240 years before Christ. It expresses little or no hope of immortality, speaking of death as final in itself, but of the fame and examples of the good as lasting. But, though "the days of the life of man may be numbered, the days of Israel are innumerable." And the author prays earnestly and confidently for the aggrandizement of Jerusalem, that God would "let the nations know that there is no God but thou only, O God,"—that He would "shew new signs,"—"make the time short,"—"gather the tribes of Jacob together, and inherit them as from the beginning,"—that He would "be merciful unto Jerusalem, his holy city, the place of his rest; fill Zion with his unspeakable oracles, and his people with his glory," &c. (Ecclus. xxxvi. 1—17.)

WISDOM OF SOLOMON.

This book, written in Greek, probably in the second century before Christ, expresses the confident belief in immortality and retribution upon good and evil deeds, mixed apparently, but vaguely, with the idea of a kingdom of the righteous on earth. (See especially ii. 23—iii. 8, v. 14—16, viii. 13, xi. 22—xii. 2.) The book is chiefly remarkable and valuable for its moral and religious maxims and precepts.

TOBIT.

Probably was written 100 or 200 years B.C., but gives a domestic story of the time of the Assyrian captivity, into which the later Jewish beliefs of angelic messengers and of a future life are introduced. The author makes Tobit expect the Babylonish captivity and the desolation of Jerusalem,—the return to the land in feebleness not imagined by the prophets, but proved in the event; and a more *distant* restoration and more glorious rebuilding of the city and temple are to follow.

[Ch. xiv. 4—7.]

Go into Media, my son; for I surely believe those things which Jonas the prophet spake of Nineveh, that it shall be overthrown; and that for a time peace shall rather be in Media; and that our brethren shall lie scattered in the earth from that good land; and Jerusalem shall be desolate, and the house of God in it shall be burned and shall be desolate for a time; and that again God will have mercy on them, and bring them again into the land, where they shall build a temple, but not like to the first, until the time of that age be fulfilled; and *afterwards they shall return from all places of their captivity, and build up Jerusalem gloriously, and the house of*

God shall be built in it for ever with a glorious building, as the prophets have spoken thereof. And all nations shall turn, and fear the Lord God truly, and shall bury their idols. So shall all nations praise the Lord, and his people shall confess God, and the Lord shall exalt his people; and all those which love the Lord God in truth and justice shall rejoice, shewing mercy to our brethren.

Here, as we have elsewhere seen, the too sanguine hope, disappointed by the event, is considered as deferred, but is not relinquished.

The only other book of the Apocrypha bearing upon this subject is 2 Esdras. But this book (written in Latin) was not produced till after most, if not all, the books of the New Testament; and its contributions to the history of the Messianic, or rather Millennial belief, if worth quoting at all, must be kept till their proper date.

Before proceeding to the New Testament, which presents Jesus of Nazareth face to face with the national expectation fully matured and becoming impatient for the Messiah's advent, we turn to inquire whether, or to what degree, the Jewish hope of a better age at hand was known, or shared, by other nations.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HOPE AS SHARED BY THE GENTILE WORLD.

IT is notorious that, for a long time before the Christian era, the heathenism of Greece and Rome had been fast sinking into contempt among Greeks and Romans, through the progress of knowledge and civilization, and that philosophy had proved itself incapable of supplying a religion in its place. The literature of the Augustan age proves both these statements at every step, whether poets play gracefully with the old mythology or sternly ridicule it; or whether philosophers (also ridiculing the old fables) carefully elaborate their eclectic doctrines for the acceptance of the cultivated few. Milton describes the fact not more poetically than truly; only he seems, for reasons of poetical art, to represent as taking place at the mere moment of Christ's nativity, that which had been really in progress for centuries before:

"The oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No trance or breathed spell
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

“The lonely mountains o'er,
 And the resounding shore,
 A voice of weeping heard and loud lament ;
 From haunted spring and dale
 Edged with poplar pale,
 The parting Genius is with sighing sent :
 With flower-inwoven tresses torn,
 The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

“In consecrated earth,
 And on the holy hearth,
 The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint :
 In urns and altars round,
 A drear and dying sound
 Affrights the flamens at their service quaint ;
 And the chill marble seems to sweat,
 While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.”*

A great want was widely felt. Human nature craved something not yet attained and seemingly unattainable. The language of St. Paul describes this feeling when he says: “The earnest expectation of the creature (or, *the creation*) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.” (Rom. viii. 19.)

For this state of things Judaism had a remedy in store in its coming developement into Christianity. But it is another question how far the Gentile world was prepared to look for it, or to accept it, from the Jews. The dispersion of the latter through all nations of the civilized world was indeed a great means of making their religious beliefs more widely known. Their general acquaintance with the Greek language (which had resulted from their dispersion) supplied the vehicle of inter-communication. The translation of their Scriptures into Greek at Alexandria had put

* Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity, xix. xx. xxi.

their noble literature and pure theology within reach of all readers through the realms of Greek and Roman civilization. Their diminished ceremonialism in their dispersion (absent as they were from their temple, and therefore unable to fulfil the sacrificial law) had made them more liberal, more accessible and less repulsive to foreigners, than in their own land. But still they were a hated and despised race. The Roman historian Tacitus calls them "despectissima pars servientium," the most despised portion of the subject nations of the great Roman empire. They are therefore not prominent in general history; and the direct allusions to them and their literature are few and far between. The few that we do find in the Roman writers of this important period are consequently all the more emphatic in their bearing.

That the Hebrew Scriptures were well known to the literary men and philosophers of the civilized world, through their Greek translation, the Septuagint, which was made about B.C. 285, is put upon distinct record in the middle of the third century of the Christian era, by the critic Longinus (in his treatise on the *Sublime*), who quotes from the book of Genesis with enthusiastic admiration. But we have now to look for such traces *before* the Christian era.

VIRGIL. There can be little doubt that Virgil, writing in the reign of Augustus, some forty years before Christ, derived the chief imagery of his well-known Fourth Eclogue, directly or indirectly, from Isaiah and Micah. The resemblance is unmistakable, though the taste of the Roman poet does not appear to advantage in his exaggeration of some of the old prophetic figures and his literalizing of others. If his acquaintance with the Hebrew prophets does not seem sufficiently explained by the general currency of their works, a more particular explanation is at hand: "The

Jews lived in great numbers in one quarter of Rome: Herod and his followers were about this time in Rome, and probably guests to Pollio (as his two sons were afterwards to him), to whom this Eclogue is inscribed. What Virgil had heard of them, he seems to have dressed up after the Gentile poetic manner, and to have recommended all together, under the splendid name of Sibyl, or Prophet, which contained some things of this nature." (*Defence of Christianity*, by Edward [Chandler], Lord Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield, 1725, p. 12.)

The purpose of Virgil is to pay acceptable homage to Augustus, whose reign, now peaceful, gives a welcome repose to the long disturbed world; and who desires and now expects an heir to his peaceful throne. That heir—the *parve puer* of the poem—unfortunately proved to be a girl; but the misadventure of Virgil's prophecy in this respect does not make his meaning the less clear or courtly.

Virgil professes indeed to have derived his materials from the Sibylline verses often alluded to by the Roman poets and historians. Of the original Sibylline verses nothing reliable now remains. The fragments now existing are probably all of Jewish or Christian origin from about 150 B.C. to A.D. 350. But we have all read the story of the Sibyl offering her nine books to king Tarquinus Superbus for a certain price; and when he would not buy them, burning three and returning to offer him the remaining six at the same price; and, again repulsed, burning three more and obtaining the full price for the last remaining three. It is supposed (if the legend is to be believed in any degree) that these books were originally brought from Cumæ in Campania, where Virgil places his Sibyl in the *Æneid*. (B. vi.) Certainly such books existed at Rome in the Republican times, and were solemnly consulted for purposes of divination. But in the year 82 B.C., whatever

Sibylline books existed were destroyed in the conflagration of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. Another collection was, however, speedily brought together; so suspiciously numerous that Augustus instituted an inquiry into their genuineness, and burnt 2000 of them as counterfeits, depositing in safe custody those that were considered genuine. So dubious is their authenticity after all.* The early Christian writers frequently appeal to the Sibylline oracles as containing prophecies of the Messiah; and it is, not without reason, believed that many of these books were, to a certain extent, recocitions of the Jewish prophecies, made to supply the craving for the old Sibylline oracles; and that through these means the Romans had gained an unconscious initiation, at second-hand, into the imagery, if not the beliefs, of the Jewish Scriptures. Hence they had derived, if not a belief in a better age to come, yet at least its poetry and sentiment, which Virgil applies with great poetical effect to the improved prospects of his own time. Some of the old imagery of the heathen Golden Age past is also naturally resumed in this connection.

The historical facts which seem to have called forth Virgil's poem are these: In the year B.C. 40, Octavius and Antony were reconciled, in part through the intervention of Pollio, consul that year, who was a great friend and patron of Virgil. Octavius married Scribonia that year, and his sister Octavia was married to Antony; this latter marriage being considered one great pledge of peace between the great rivals. Both the wives are pregnant at

* See Smith's *Dict. of Greek and Rom. Antiq.*: *Sibyllini Libri*. See also *Theological Review*, Oct. 1870, art. 1. *The Sibyl*, by W. M. W. Call, M.A., who reviews the inquiries of Dr. J. H. Friedlieb, Professor in Breslau University (1852), and of Dr. A. Hilgenfeld, Professor in Jena (1857), and who confidently refers the composition of the third Sibylline book (which he calls that of the Jewish Sibyl, and on which Virgil's Fourth Eclogue is founded) to some Jew of the Maccabean period, and finds in it references to events of the reign of Ptolemy Physcon, between B.C. 142 and 137.

the time in question,—the latter by her previous husband Marcellus. In due course of time Octavia has a son, Marcellus; and Scribonia a daughter, Julia. Octavius (Augustus) having no child except Julia, afterwards adopted Marcellus, giving him Julia in marriage; and so the Virgilian prophecy, in spite of its original direct failure, seemed to be in a fair way for accomplishment in a secondary sense. But young Marcellus died in his twentieth year, and never reigned.

It is right to add that a more recondite interpretation of Virgil's vaticinations was suggested by the learned Heyne, who thought that the birth of the boy might poetically mean merely the origin of the better age about to dawn upon the world. Others, to save Virgil's credit as a classical poet, bid us observe that he puts the whole poem, after the first few lines, *into the mouth of the Cumæan Sibyl*, and means, they think, to represent *her* as having prophesied these things, ages ago, respecting *Augustus himself*. In a similar spirit, all sorts of omens and prodigies were courteously reported to have occurred at his birth, as enumerated by Suetonius in his Life of Octavius (ch. xciv.).

The poem, however interpreted as to its particular application, certainly describes the Roman hope of better days under Octavius Augustus; and its imagery unmistakably resembles that of Isaiah, Micah, and other Messianic Hebrew prophets. It is as follows, translated as literally as the English idiom allows:

ECLOGUE iv. POLLIO.

Sicilian Muses, let us sing of somewhat greater themes;
Groves and lowly shrubs are not to every one's taste:
If we sing of sylvan themes, let them be such as are worthy
of a Consul's ear.
Now is come the final age of the Cumæan prophecy.
The great round of time begins afresh.

Now the Virgin (Astræa) returns ; the kingdom of Saturn
returns ;

Now a new race is sent down from heaven above.

Only be Thou propitious to the child at his birth,
With whom first the iron age shall end and the golden arise
on the whole world ;

O chaste Lucina ! be propitious ; already thine Apollo reigns.
Thus, in thy consulship, yes, thine, the glorious age shall
come in,

Pollio ! and the majestic months shall begin their march.
Under thy guidance, any remaining traces of our wickedness
Shall be cancelled, and leave the earth free from its constant
dread.

He shall be endowed with the life of the Gods, and shall
see

Heroes mixed with Gods, and shall himself be seen by
them,

And with his ancestral worth shall rule a peaceful world.

But to thee, O Boy, the earth without culture shall pour
forth as its first offerings

Ivy branches wandering abroad, mixed with spikenard,
And the Egyptian bean mixed with the smiling acanthus.
The she-goats of their own accord shall bring home their
milk-distended teats,

Nor shall the herds of cattle fear the mighty lions.

The cradle shall spontaneously pour out sweet flowers upon
thee.

The serpent shall die out ; the deceitful poisonous herb
shall cease ;

The Assyrian amomum shall be of common growth.

But, so soon as thou shalt be able to read the praises of
heroes and the deeds of thy father,*

* Julius Cæsar, who adopted Octavius, according to one interpretation ; Octavius himself, according to the more obvious one.

And to know what virtue and valour mean,
The plain shall gradually grow yellow with soft ears of corn,
And the ruddy grape shall hang upon the wild brambles,
And the hard oak distil honey like dew-drops.

Yet a few traces of our ancient iniquity will lurk,
Impelling men to tempt the sea in ships, and to wall their
cities,

And to plough the ground with furrows.

There will be a second Tiphys* and another Argo
To carry chosen heroes ; there will still be new wars ;
And again shall a mighty Achilles be sent to Troy.

After that, when confirmed life shall have made thee
a man,

The mariner himself shall give up sea-faring ; nor shall ships
Exchange traffic ; each land shall produce everything.

The ground shall not submit to the rake, nor the vine to
the pruning-hook,

And the stout ploughman shall loose the yoke from the bulls.
Nor shall the wool be taught to assume artificial colours,
But the rams shall naturally vary their fleeces in the
meadows,

Now with sweetly blushing purple, now with saffron yellow ;
The sandyx shall clothe with its own hue the lambs that
feed upon it.

“ Run on, O ages such as these ;” the fates,
Immutable in their firm will, have said to their revolving
spindles.

O thou dear offspring of the Gods, Jove’s great descendant,
Accept thy mighty honours ! the time will soon come !
See the world tottering with its convex weight,
See its lands, and the ocean’s tracts, and heaven profound ;
See how all things rejoice in the age about to come !

O, may the latter part of my life hold on so long !

* Steersman in the Argonautic expedition.

And my breath suffice to speak thy deeds !
Not the Thracian Orpheus shall surpass me in song,
Nor Linus ; though his mother help the one, his father the
other,
Calliope her Orpheus, the handsome Apollo his Linus.
Though Pan were to contend with me and Arcadia to be
judge,
Even Pan should confess himself surpassed, and Arcadia
assent.

Begin, little boy, to recognize thy mother by her smile ;
To that mother ten months have brought long weariness.
Begin, little boy : him whom his parents smile not on,
No God thinks worthy of his board, nor Goddess of her
couch.

Such was the poet Virgil's patriotic anticipation of a better time, then immediately about to dawn upon the Roman world. In his *Aeneid* also (Book vi.) he represents the shade of Anchises as foretelling to *Aeneas* the glories of the Augustan age, and pathetically anticipating the premature death of the young Marcellus, which, of course, had occurred when Virgil wrote those lines.

SUETONIUS (born about A.D. 70) is our next reference. In his *Lives of the Twelve Cæsars*—from Julius Cæsar to Domitian—Suetonius makes the birth of Octavius to have been attended with prodigies indicative of his future supremacy. And it was not unnatural that augurs and poets under the early Empire should find or fancy various intimations, in the Sibylline and other oracles, of the coming consolidation of power in an individual ruler. Thus, in the time of Julius Cæsar (according to both Suetonius and Cicero), it was said to be declared in the Sibylline books that the Parthians could not be conquered except by a king; a reason, in the view of some persons, for

urging Julius Cæsar to proclaim himself king. It is very curious that these traditions, or alleged oracles or prophecies, are distinctly stated by the Roman historians to have been derived from the East. Thus Suetonius, in his Life of Vespasian (chap. xxi.), says :

Throughout the whole East an ancient and uninterrupted opinion had become very prevalent, that it was fated that at this time *some persons coming from Judæa should gain supreme power*. This—as was afterwards plain from the event—was a prediction of the Roman Empire; but the Jews, applying it to themselves, rebelled.*

TACITUS. To the same effect, and with one important phrase identical, the historian Tacitus, the older contemporary of Suetonius, says :

A great many persons were persuaded, that according to the contents of ancient sacerdotal books, the East would at that very time grow powerful, and that *some persons coming from Judæa would gain supreme power*. These ambiguous words were a prediction of Vespasian and Titus. But the common people [of the Jews], as is customary with what men desire, interpreting this great destiny as awaiting themselves, were not moved to the true view even by contrary experience.†

* Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus ac constans opinio ; esse in fatis ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. Id de imperio Romano, quantum postea eventu patuit, prædictum, Judeæ, ad se habentes, rebillarunt. (*Suet. in Vesp. c. iv.*)

† Pluribus inerat persuasio, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore ut valesceret Oriens profectique Judæa rerum potirentur. Quæ ambages Vespasianum ac Titum prædixerant. Sed vulgus more humanæ cupidinis, sibi tantum fatorum magnitudinem interpretati, ne adversis quidem ad vera mutabantur. (*Tacit. Hist. Lib. v. ch. xiii.*)

We cannot but be amused to observe with what easy self-complacency these Roman imperial historians, *more humanæ cupidinis*, apply the rumour, with no little violence of interpretation, to the glorification of their own country and its rulers. But the fact of the then prevalent expectation of a new and mighty power about to spring up in the East, or from the East, is the matter of importance to notice as attested positively by them.

JOSEPHUS. The Jewish historian of the war of Vespasian and Titus against Jerusalem and Judæa, gives precisely similar testimony to the prevalence of the Jewish national expectation, and also adopts the Romanizing interpretation. This may seem strange in a Jew, who can scarcely be thought sincere in applying the prophecies which anticipate an extended kingdom for a descendant of David, to the Roman generals who destroyed Jerusalem and overthrew the Jewish state. But we must remember that Josephus fell into the hands of Vespasian during the siege, and ever afterwards endeavoured to conciliate the good-will of the Roman commanders. His words are :

What did most elevate them [the Jews] in undertaking this war, was an ambiguous oracle that was found in their sacred writings, how about that time *one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth*. The Jews took this prediction to belong to themselves in particular, and many of the wise men were thereby deceived in their determination. Now this oracle certainly denoted the government of Vespasian, who was appointed Emperor in Judæa.
(*Wars of the Jews*, B. vi. ch. v. § 4, Whiston's trans.)

Such are the testimonies of the Roman historians and poets (including Josephus among the former), in regard to

the prevalence of the Jewish Messianic hope, shortly before and shortly after the opening of the Christian era. Other and more ancient allusions, correspondences and parallels to the Jewish beliefs have been found or imagined by classical scholars, as in Plato's Dialogues of Socrates, and even as far back as the poems of Homer. But these resemblances are too fanciful and slight to be relied on in serious argument; and if the similarity between the old Homeric myths and the Jewish or Christian theology were admitted, it would not be easy to imagine how, at so early a period, the Greek heroic poet could have derived his ideas from the Jews.*

The position here taken simply is: that shortly before the coming of Christ, the Roman world beyond Judea was inoculated with something like the Messianic hope, and that the Roman historians distinctly attest its prevalence through the East in general.

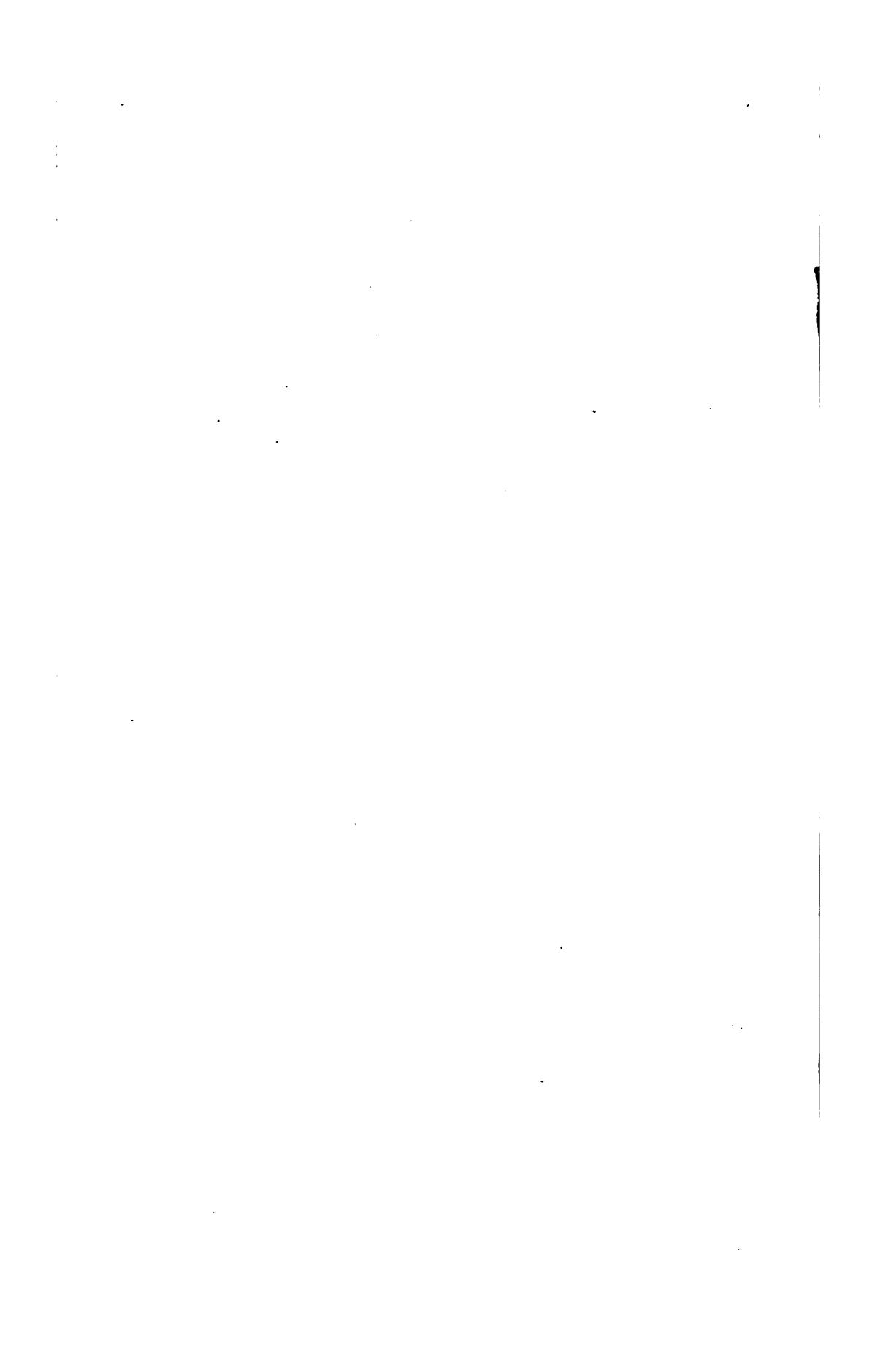
The New Testament presents, very fully, the next historical aspect of the hope of Israel, as it was manifested by the nation itself on the eve of its crisis and fall. The popular expectation rises elastic to meet an expected Messiah, and He of Nazareth comes face to face with it;—if to fulfil it, to do so in a new and unexpected manner.

* See *Juventus Mundi*, by the Right Hon. W. Gladstone, where (ch. viii.) the Homeric conceptions of Pallas and Apollo are gravely ascribed to the influence of the Hebrew theology. To many readers, neither is the resemblance clear, nor does the suggestion redound to the dignity of Revelation.

PART II.

THE

MESSIAH OF CHRISTIAN ACCEPTANCE.



THE
MESSIAH OF CHRISTIAN ACCEPTANCE.

CHAPTER I.

"WAITING FOR THE CONSOLATION OF ISRAEL."

WE have now to search the New Testament records, with a single view to their bearing upon the Jewish Messianic idea and its asserted fulfilment in Jesus of Nazareth. To read them under this guiding thought is not indeed to investigate their full scope; yet it is no narrow, cramping point of view unworthy of the Christian theologian. It brings us to the centre of the matter, though it may not fill up all its wide circumference. For Christianity is a history; and this inquiry shews its historical relation to the earlier Judaism. There is an avowed dependence of the one religion upon the other, which is best developed by this process. The two great stages of divine revelation are by this means seen in their connection and progress. And let Judaism receive due thanks (not always freely rendered) from the Christian reader who sees how his "salvation is from the Jews."

Beginning then with the Gospel histories, we have to

notice how the Jewish hope expressed and manifested itself in the times to which these books relate ; and how it directed upon Jesus of Nazareth the scrutinizing gaze of his countrymen. We have to inquire how far he answered their expectations, and how far he disappointed them ; and, more particularly, whether he really claimed to be their expected Messiah ; and if so, how far he taught a different idea of the Messiah from the prevailing one, or from the prophetic one ; and to explain and justify any such divergence. In this connection, we must also inquire what representations his historians, the evangelists, give of his Messiahship, as they see it in the retrospect of his finished life.

When Jesus began to preach in Galilee, the whole country, including Judea and Samaria also, was in earnest expectation of the Messiah's immediate advent. The fame of John the Baptist's austere manners and fine moral preaching had led many to think he might be the promised Messiah ; but John had disclaimed the office and distinctly declared that he was sent to prepare the way for one greater than himself, who "should baptize with the Holy Spirit." He virtually pointed Jesus out as the Messiah when he baptized him. And Jesus himself was plainly understood to claim the character when he began to preach and to say : "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand ; repent ye and believe the gospel." (Mark i. 15 ; Matt. iv. 17.)

But we must go back to earlier (though less strictly historical) incidents, the traditions of which give a true picture of the prevailing hope of the Jews, though the events in which they are embodied cannot be relied upon as strictly historical.

Prefixed to the first and the third Gospels are some brief notices of the birth and childhood of Jesus, to which there

is nothing corresponding in those of Mark and John ; for these two begin the history with the ministry of John the Baptist and the preaching of Jesus, when the latter was about thirty years old. The prefixed sketches in Matthew and Luke may be regarded by the critic as traditions which had grown up, not during his obscure and unnoticed infancy and boyhood, but *retrospectively* rather, from the time of his conspicuous public life, or even after his death and the wider reception of his Gospel. Such a process would be very natural. Strange if it had not taken place. Yet there is no room to doubt that these traditions correctly represent the Jewish Messianic expectations which prevailed before his birth and during his childhood and early manhood—as also indeed during his ministry. And nothing can be more graphic than the picture thus given of the national expectation as ready once more to centre upon any suitable person who might arise.

To Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, the angel Gabriel is represented as promising a son, who

shall turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to *make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* (Luke i. 16, 17.)

These expressions are partly quoted from the prophet Malachi (iv. 5, 6) and the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus (xlviii. 10).

To Mary of Nazareth a son is promised (Luke i. 32, 33), of whom it is said :

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and *the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over*

the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

The natural meaning of these passages is, to express the temporal, national hope of the Jewish people, such as we have seen continually recurrent and continually disappointed in earlier periods. Mary's song again (in verses 54, 55) contemplates thoroughly national blessings :

*He hath holpen his servant Israel
In remembrance of his mercy ;
As he spake to our fathers,
To Abraham and to his seed for ever.*

In Matthew i. 22, 23, Isaiah's prophecy of Emmanuel is applied to the expected child :

Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying :
Behold the young woman shall be with child and shall bring forth a son ;
And they shall call his name Emmanuel,
(Which, being interpreted, means : God is with us).*

So, in Luke (i. 68—79), Zacharias, the father of John, anticipates for his son the work of preparing for this temporal kingdom of the Most High,—temporal, but truly religious :

Blessed be the God of Israel ;
For he hath *visited and redeemed his people,*
And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us
In the house of his servant David ;
As he spake by the mouth of his holy ones,
His prophets, since the world began :
That we should be *saved from our enemies,*
And from the hand of all that hate us ;

* Is. vii. 14. See pp. 57, 58.

To perform *the mercy promised to our fathers,*
And to remember his holy covenant,
The oath which he sware to *our father Abraham,*
That he would grant unto us,
That we, being *delivered out of the hand of our enemies,*
Might serve him without fear,
In holiness and righteousness before him,
All the days of our life.

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the
Highest ;
For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to pre-
pare his ways,
To give knowledge of salvation unto his people
By the remission of their sins,
Through the tender mercy of our God,
Whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us ;
To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the
shadow of death,
To guide our feet into the way of peace.

Simeon's song, when the parents of Jesus brought the child into the temple, "to do for him after the custom of the law," expresses the same mixed national and religious hope. This old man is described (Luke ii. 25) as "just and devout, *waiting for the consolation of Israel;*" and, as it had been revealed to him "that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ (Messiah)," he took the child up in his arms, and blessed God, and said :

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart
In peace, according to thy word ;
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,
Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peo-
ples,

*A light to lighten the Gentiles,
And the glory of thy people Israel.* (Luke ii. 29—32.)

Anna, the prophetess, coming in that instant, "gave thanks likewise to the Lord, and spake of him to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem." And Herod's savage edict (mentioned in Matt. ii. 16), ordering the destruction of the male infants in Bethlehem, is conceived upon the supposition of an heir to David's throne having been born.

But, with all this, there are ascribed to the boy himself at twelve years old, words which imply rather the impression of a purely spiritual, than of a temporal kingdom, when his parents found him in the temple among the doctors of the law, and his mother said to him: "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. He said unto them: How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke ii. 46—49). This beautiful tradition imagines a spiritual Messiah conscious even in childhood of the heavenly mission before him.

CHAPTER II.

JOHN THE BAPTIST.

FROM these traditions of Christ's childhood (which are at any rate authentic descriptions of Jewish feeling and expectation at that time), we pass on to the clear historical period when Jesus came forward in public life at about the age of thirty. The ministry of John the Baptist shews us the hope of Israel rising into urgent expectation.

John is, according to the fourth Gospel, "a man sent from God," "for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe." "He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light." (John i. 6—8.) Luke says, "The word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness" (iii. 2). He calls himself (in Isaiah's phrase), and is called by the evangelists, "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." He denounces wrath to come; preaches repentance and good morals; declares that "the *kingdom of heaven** is at hand," and that he is the forerunner of a mightier than himself. Luke's account (the fullest of these narratives) is as follows (iii. 3—18):

And he (John) came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;—as it is written in the book of the

* Matt. iii. 2. On this phrase, see (*infra*) Ch. V.

words of Esaias the prophet, saying: The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low ; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth ; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him: O generation of vipers ! who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come ? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance ; and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father ; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees ; every tree, therefore, which bringeth not good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.

And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then ? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none ; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

Then came also publicans [collectors of the Roman tribute] to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do ? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

And the (Roman) soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do ? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely ; and be content with your wages.

And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, *whether he were the Christ or not* ; John answered, saying unto them all :

I indeed baptize you with water ; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not

worthy to unloose ; he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire ; whose winnowing-fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner ; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

And many other things, in his exhortation, preached he unto the people. (See also Matt. iii. and Mark i.)

Quite consistent in facts and spirit, though very different in form and order of narrative, is the account given in the Gospel of John (i. 19—28), where priests and levites come from Jerusalem to interrogate the Baptist as to his pretensions.

The baptism of Jesus follows. It is most fully related by Matthew (iii. 13—17) :

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me ? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now ; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water ; and lo ! the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him ; and lo ! a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. (See also Mark i. 9—11 ; Luke iii. 21, 22.)

John's Gospel (i. 29—34) does not actually say that Jesus was baptized, but implies it in saying that the Baptist recognized him by the descent of the Spirit upon him, and proclaimed him thereupon as the Son of God who would baptize with the Holy Spirit.

All this plainly represents Jesus as, in the view of John

the Baptist, a great Prophet, long looked for and destined to a great work ; as, in fact, the coming Messiah.

But, that John himself looked upon Jesus in this light is plain also from the message which he sent to the latter from his prison. (See Matt. xi. 2—, and Luke vii. 18—.) Having “heard in the prison the works of Christ,” he sent two of his disciples and said unto him, “Art thou he that should come? or do we look for another?” *He that should come*, plainly means the expected Messiah. And the natural interpretation of the Baptist’s message is, that he who had already looked upon Jesus as about to sustain that character, and had proclaimed him accordingly, was surprised and disappointed at the state of captivity in which he, the Forerunner of the Messiah, now found himself; and by this message intended, not indelicately, to remind his superior of the neglect into which he felt he had fallen. No wonder that John still expected the outward kingdom of his nation’s general hope. Nor could Jesus in his reply altogether correct the misapprehension ; but bade the messengers recount to John the benevolent miracles which they saw, and added, “Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.”

The fourth Gospel quite consistently states that, before John was cast into prison, a question arose among some of his disciples about baptismal purification, some having hinted to John, as with feelings of jealousy, that Jesus (or his disciples in his name) was now baptizing and receiving many disciples in that way. To which John distinctly and nobly replied :

A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom ; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and hear-

eth his voice, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. (John iii. 27—30.)

Could anything be more simple, natural and truth-like, than this picture of John the Baptist's hopes, beliefs and difficulties, as, with the zealous Jewish eyes of a conscious successor of the old Prophets, he looked upon all the signs of the times and welcomed the approaching establishment of the Messiah's kingdom? Could anything surpass his magnanimity?

CHAPTER III.

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS IN THE DESERT.

THE conflict is next disclosed to us as going on in the mind of Jesus himself,—the conflict of Messianic thought, hope and duty.

This narrative of the temptation of Jesus in the desert requires to be read critically and interpreted reasonably. But, for our present purpose, the same conclusions come out from any of the various schemes of interpretation that have been proposed. Whether this scene be taken literally, or regarded as a supernatural vision presented to the Saviour's mind, or as describing figuratively the thoughts and emotions which passed through his mind during his lonely retreat in the desert after his baptism by John,—on any supposition, it represents the conflict of the two Messianic ideas: the temporal, Jewish, worldly idea; and the spiritual, world-wide, Christian idea. And that conflict goes on in the mind of the Messiah himself, when, on his public designation as such, he retires from his fellow-men (as well he needed) for self-communion and self-consecration to the Heavenly Will. (See Matt. iv. 1—11; Mark i. 12, 13; Luke iv. 1—13.)

Jesus is tempted to fulfil the Jewish expectation; and that temptation is resisted by him at every point. Hungering, he feels the suggestion to use his conscious miraculous powers for the supply of his bodily wants: "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made

bread." And to this suggestion (representative of actual temptations afterwards continually recurrent during his ministry) he resolutely replied: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." And, throughout his ministry, the power which twice gave food to hungry multitudes in desert places was never exercised for personal support or comfort.

Then he comes, whether in thought or in vision, to Jerusalem, and seems to be standing on a pinnacle of the temple. Temptation whispers: Make the coming of the Messiah conspicuous at once. There is an old prophecy which says, "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in."^{*} And the popular belief has pretty well agreed that "when Messiah cometh, no man knoweth whence he is."[†] So, "if thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."[‡] Cast thyself boldly down then, and gain the adherence of the astonished multitude to thy cause, as their temporal Messiah. "The devil can quote Scripture," it is well said. But the Messiah will apply it correctly and religiously: "Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." This temptation is, in spirit, continually recurrent, like the first, throughout the brief ministry of Jesus; and the visionary scene has foreshewn him that it will be so. The people would make him a king by force[§] when they see his more conspicuous miracles. They cry, "Hosanna to the Son of David;" "Blessed

* Mal. iii. 1.

+ John vii. 27.

‡ Ps. xci. 11, 12.

§ John vi. 15. Also Matt. xiv. 22, and Mark vi. 45, mention his retiring to the mountain, on this occasion, to pray.

be the *kingdom of our father David that now cometh*,* when he enters Jerusalem to die upon the cross.

And one other temptation, embracing all the rest, is presented to his mind : the desire of empire. "Again the devil taketh him up an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them ; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Here is the Jewish dream of worldly ambition, desperate and almost grotesque in the act of offering itself to Jesus of Nazareth. But it *was* the Jewish dream ; and if its presentation cannot be taken as describing any conflict in the mind of Jesus, it plainly puts in contrast the expectation with which the Jews in general were ready to hail him as a regal, secular, worldly Messiah (if religious instructor too), who shall emancipate the holy people from the Roman power, and lead them to victory and empire,—and that higher thought which in the Jewish prophets is joined with this, and in his actual ministry is to supersede it : the thought of a spiritual heavenly kingdom, a kingdom of God on earth ; the growing kingdom of Virtue, Truth, Religion, Purity ; the kingdom of heavenly thoughts and affections, which will be perfected when man becomes immortal after death. The contrast is presented to him between the work which he is consciously fitted to do, and that which his countrymen are most ready to welcome. Its difficulties, its dangers, its hopelessness except to the eye of divine faith, are presented to view. But his divine faith serenely says, "Get thee hence, Satan ; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

The record of Christ's Temptation, in short, brings face to face the Messiah of Jewish hope and the Messiah of Christian realization. They are, in the mind of Jesus,

* Matt xxi. 9; Mark xi. 10.

mutually incompatible and irreconcilable. The one is in his conception, the other in the circumstances that solicit him. To the one he adheres religiously ; the other he rejects without hesitation. Beautiful is the spirit of the evangelist Matthew's comment on the result of this temptation in the wilderness. The struggle successful, divine peace ensues : "Then the devil leaveth him ; and behold ! angels came and ministered unto him."

CHAPTER IV.

THE MINISTRY AND PREACHING OF JESUS.

WE now reach the heart of the Messianic question. Was Jesus of Nazareth truly the Christ, or Messiah, of Jewish promise?—of Jewish prophecy?—of Jewish expectation? Did he believe himself to be so? Did he profess to be so? Was he understood by his contemporaries to claim the character? Did his disciples join him and adhere to him under that belief? If he did claim the character or office of Messiah, in what sense did he claim it, and in what sense fulfil it? His ministry is the full and final answer to these inquiries.

All the four evangelists avow, and continually imply it as their theme to shew, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah who was to come. Matthew opens his Gospel with the genealogy of Jesus under this title: “The book of the generation of *Jesus Christ* (or Jesus Messiah), the son of David, the son of Abraham.” He tells us that when John the Baptist had heard in the prison the works of *Christ*, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him, Art thou *he that should come?*” (xi. 2). In xii. 16, where he reports that Jesus charged the multitudes not to make him known (as the Messiah), Matthew quotes and applies to him a prophecy of Isaiah, which is among the most decidedly Messianic. Mark opens his Gospel with these words: “The beginning of the gospel of *Jesus Christ*, the Son of God.” Luke, in his last chapter, records two conversations

of Jesus after his resurrection, the one with the disciples on the way to Emmaus, the other with the apostles at Jerusalem, in which he expounds to them the Scriptures with a view to prove to them that "*it behoved the Christ to suffer*, to rise from the dead, and enter into his glory" (xxiv. 26, 46). And John, near the end of his Gospel, expressly defines his purpose in writing it: "These are written, that ye might believe that *Jesus is the Christ*, the Son of God" (xx. 31). But throughout all the four memoirs it is plain, that the implied question in every one's mind is, whether Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Messiah, or not; and as having claimed to be such, he is crucified, according to them all. That he did not ostentatiously avow himself under this name, is indeed true; nay, more, he studiously avoided it on ordinary occasions; and abundant reasons shall shortly be given for this reserve. But from first to last it is perfectly plain that, by his acts and mode of teaching, he was understood virtually to claim the character; and that every Jew regarded him, whether with friendly or hostile feelings, from that point of view.

It does not seem necessary to distinguish, as modern criticism is fond of doing, between the evidence of the first three Gospels and that of the fourth. The asserted central difference of *idea* upon which the fourth is constructed is not traceable, at any rate, in connection with the present subject. The difference, if there be any, is only as to the degree of frequency or emphasis with which Jesus is declared to be the Messiah. It may be true that the writer of the fourth Gospel (universally understood to be of later authorship than the rest) makes the Messiahship of Jesus, as a doctrine, somewhat more prominent than the others. It may be that he asserts it oftener (he cannot more clearly), and even that he ascribes to Jesus himself a more distinct, more frequent, or more public assertion of it,

than the others. But the fact is plain in all the four, that Jesus was believed to claim the character of Messiah, that his claims were matter of popular and priestly discussion continually, and that his four evangelists all write with a view to shew that he was the Christ who was to come.

During the ministry of John the Baptist, priests and levites came to that prophet from Jerusalem, to inquire into his pretensions (an independent intimation that the Jewish mind was all on the alert in expectation of the Messiah), and to demand why he baptized if he was neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the expected prophet. (John i. 25.)

Jesus gathers his disciples round him under the plain belief on their part, expressed by one or two in the record, that he was the Christ. "We have found the Messias," says Andrew to his brother Simon (John i. 41); and Philip to Nathaniel (45). When Jesus, in the synagogue at Nazareth, reads these words from the book of Isaiah, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath *anointed me* (or made me Messiah) to preach the gospel to the poor," &c., he is plainly understood by the hearers virtually to claim this character, their only difficulty being to accept as a prophet one who has arisen in their own village. (Luke iv. 18—.)

At the feast of Tabernacles (John vii.), where he attended as privately as possible, there was much discussion about him. "Some said, He is a good man. Others said, Nay, but he deceiveth the people" (12). And some said, "Is not this he whom they seek to kill? But, lo! he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? Howbeit, we know this man, whence he is; but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is" (25—27). "And many of the people believed on him and said, When Christ cometh, will

he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" (31). The discussion was renewed on the last day of the feast, when "many of the people said, Of a truth, this is the prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem where David was? So there was a division among the people because of him" (40—44);—a controversy which was continually repeated in varied terms, but with essentially the same elements of belief and doubt or disbelief.

The demoniacs,* uttering their native feelings without prudential restraint of any kind, continually address him as "the Son of God," "the Holy One of God," now with fear, now apparently with passive welcome; "and he, rebuking them, suffered them not to speak, for *they knew he was the Christ.*" (Mark i. 24; Luke iv. 34, 41.) He would not have them proclaim him as such.

The Sermon on the Mount struck the hearers with astonishment, as the preaching of one who "taught as having authority, and not as the scribes." (Matt. vii. 28, 29.) His emphatic, *I say unto you, in correction of the shortcomings of old-time precepts,* was the expression of a conscious prophet, if it was not that of a pretender. Could any one who heard it doubt that the speaker assumed to be "the prophet," if not "the Christ"?

* According to the Jewish psychology, any one afflicted in mind or speech (which is the representative of mind) was considered as possessed by a demon or spirit of a bad man deceased. (See Josephus, *Antiq.* viii. ii. 5; *Wars*, vii. vi. 3.) Accordingly, the maniac, the deaf-mute, the epileptic, are so described in the Gospels. When the demon is cast out, the dumb speaks, and the maniac is in his right mind. It is remarkable that the insane (when not passive) usually speak and act in the name of the evil spirits possessing them, and are afraid lest Jesus should cast them out into desert places.

The leper who comes to him, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (Matt. viii. 2; Mark i. 40; Luke v. 12); the centurion who intreats him for his servant (Matt. viii. 5; Luke vii. 2), are but samples of the earnest interest with which his miraculous powers were regarded on all hands, and of the underlying belief that he must be at least a prophet mighty in word and deed, and most likely the great Messiah himself.

In John xi. 27, Martha of Bethany professes her distinct belief in Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."

His controversy with the Scribes and Pharisees who wilfully ascribe his miracles to the power of Beelzebub, is a virtual assertion of his Messianic claims, and is understood and felt to be so when he adds: "If I, by the spirit of God, cast out demons, then *the kingdom of God is come unto you.*" (Matt. xii. 28; also Mark iii. 23; Luke xi. 19.) And he thereupon accused them of consciously sinning against the Holy Spirit in thus pretending to ascribe his miracles to an evil power. In the same connection (according to Luke xi. 29—), he declares himself to be greater than Solomon as a teacher of wisdom.

A remarkable conversation is recorded when, near Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus inquires of his disciples what are the prevailing opinions respecting him and his work. The account is virtually identical in Matt. xvi., Mark viii. and Luke ix. According to Matthew:

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" This declaration,

THOU ART THE CHRIST, our Lord proclaims to be the very rock on which his church must be founded ; and Simon, for making it, is called Peter (the Rock) : "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona ; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven (it is not the human, worldly idea of the coming Messiah, but the divine and true one) ; and I say unto thee, that thou art Peter (Rock) ; and upon this rock I will build my church ; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." It is added, that "he charged his disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ." And the history pursues : "From that time forth Jesus began to shew unto his disciples how that he must go up unto Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day ;" an announcement which (as we shall shortly see) contains the key to his conduct as to the avowal of his Messianic character.

Another remarkable instance in which he avows his Messiahship, is in his conversation with the woman of Samaria (John iv.). From his proved power to read her past life, she is led to exclaim : "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet ;" and immediately runs on (with a view, no doubt, to turn the conversation) to ask his decision as to the disputed question of the comparative holiness of Jerusalem and Mount Gerizim as places of worship. He answers, that "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth ;" and (in effect) that to such worshipers Jerusalem and Gerizim, and every other place, are alike holy. And then the woman says : "I know that Messias cometh, who is called Christ ; when he is come, he will tell us all things." And Jesus plainly responds : "I that speak unto thee am he." The prevailing expectation of a coming Messiah is here seen to pervade

Samaria as well as Judea and Galilee ; and it is curious, but by no means unaccountable, that the reserve which our Saviour usually maintained as to his Messiahship, in Jerusalem amid scribes and ceremonialists, and also in Galilee among enthusiastic friends or jealous fellow-towns-men, is here thrown off, when once for all he passes through Samaria, and, together with the purest doctrine respecting worship, leaves behind him the most unreserved declaration of his Messianic authority.

Do we now ask, Why was he so reserved at other times and in other places ? Why did he forbid the multitudes of sick and lame and demoniacs whom he cured, to make him known ?* Why did he charge his disciples, after Peter's explicit avowal of belief in him as the Messiah, "that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ" ? (Matt. xvi. 20 ; Mark viii. 30 ; Luke ix. 21.) Why did he, on occasion of his transfiguration, when Moses and Elijah had appeared to talk with him of his coming decease, charge his disciples, as they came down from the mountain, saying, "Tell this vision to no man, until the Son of Man be risen from the dead" ? (Matt. xvii. 9.)

The whole explanation lies in the existing worldly and outside expectations of the Jews respecting "him that should come." They looked for a temporal king, a warrior, a deliverer from the Roman power, a restorer of the kingdom of David, who should make Judea ascendant among the nations of the world. They expected indeed that he would rule in righteousness, and teach and vindicate pure religion ; but, above all, he was to be their temporal prince. We have reproduced in full array the Jewish Messianic

* See Matt. ix. 30, xii. 16 ; Mark vii. 36, &c. : "Their eyes were opened, and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it." "Great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all, and charged them that they should not make him known."

prophecies, and, if we mistake not, have found them tending continually towards a spiritual rather than a temporal hope. But when Jesus appeared, the latter was again decidedly in the ascendant. How this delusive belief still possessed the Jewish people, after the ministry of Jesus, and made them the ready victims of adventurers or impostors who promised them victory over the Romans, is hinted in the speech of Gamaliel in the book of Acts (v. 36, 37), and in the Roman captain's question to Paul (xxi. 38), and is fully shewn in Josephus (*Antiq.* xvii. x. 4, 5; xx. v. 1, 2; xx. viii. 6; , ii. xiii. 5, &c.).

If, then, Jesus was divinely commissioned (as his followers believe) to fulfil the spiritual Messianic hope, not on behalf of Israel only, but of the world at large, how was he to announce and sustain such pretensions? Should he, from first to last, in all places and on every occasion, avow himself the Messiah and claim to be received as such? Apart from all questions of prudence, did truth, did sincerity and godly simplicity, require this avowal on his part? Quite the contrary. Truth and plain dealing forbade it. The true word may be utterly false to the apprehension of ignorant or prejudiced hearers, and the true man must therefore speak it guardedly. To have avowed himself the Messiah, by that abused name, would of course have been understood to mean what was commonly understood by it. No explanation on his part could have undone the magic of that word. To use it, would have been to sanction expectations which he knew he was not empowered or commissioned to fulfil. It would have been to fan the enthusiasm of his nation into a flame of cruel, but hopeless, objectless war, and precipitate its still lingering downfall. It would have been to deserve the accusation (which the Jewish rulers falsely made against him, as the most likely to rouse the jealousy of the Roman government), that he

had set himself up as king of the Jews in opposition to Pilate's administration. Here truly the temptation scene of the desert was realized from place to place, in Galilee and Judea. When solemnly adjured by Pilate, "that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God," he replies, "Thou hast said right." (Matt. xxvi. 63.) He is repeatedly described by Pilate as "Jesus who is called Christ." And to the governor's distinct question, "Art thou the king of the Jews?" he replies in the affirmative, adding (according to John's Gospel), that his kingdom *is not of this world*, but is the kingdom of *Truth*. (John xviii. 33—37.)

Abstaining as Jesus did, during the earlier part of his ministry, from the avowal of the title *Messiah*, he habitually used, when speaking of himself, that of *the Son of Man*. The import of this title is learnt by comparing it with similar phrases. A *son of valour* is, in Hebrew phraseology, a valiant man; *son of sorrow* is an afflicted man; *son of wisdom*, a wise man; *son of Belial*, an idolater or a worthless man. So, by the same analogy, a *son of man* means either a child of mortality, a human being simply, or, more distinctively, ONE DEVOTED TO MANKIND, a servant or friend of human interests. No doubt it is with this latter meaning that it is used in the book of Ezekiel as the designation of that prophet. The prophet is pre-eminently the friend of mankind. And, no doubt, our Lord used the title in this sense as his own designation.* He does not forego the character of Messiah in calling himself the Son of Man. He hints it rather to the minds of the intelligent. The Messiah is one of many such Sons of Man; and as chief among them all he is THE SON OF MAN.

The life of Jesus, like his pretensions, was necessarily enigmatical to his countrymen, and admitted only of gradual

* The curious have found that Ezekiel is called Son of Man about 89 times, and Jesus about 80 times. (Cruden's *Concordance: Son of Man.*)

appreciation on the part even of the more candid and religious among them. First, his lowly origin perplexed them, till doubt gave way before his miraculous works and living word. Then, when they saw those miracles all spent in mercy to the sick, the afflicted and the poor, they wondered that he wrought no supernatural deliverance on behalf of his conquered but expectant country. When he spoke with authority, they wondered that he pronounced no blessing on those who should shine in arms, that he gave no precepts for the restoration of the Israelitish polity, that he uttered no prophecy of the coming splendour of Jerusalem. That he did not court public notice, but shrank from every exhibition of popular favour, assumed no royal state and promised no royal gifts,—all this astonished and perplexed those who looked to him “to redeem Israel.” That he associated sometimes with the collectors of the Roman tribute, that he did not despise the Samaritan nor reject even the heathen from his presence, wounded their most sensitive prejudice, their religious exclusiveness. They wondered who could be saved* if that rich man could not, who was ready to risk all for the chance of occupying a high place in the Messiah’s worldly kingdom, but unwilling to give up all for the sufferings of discipleship to a heavenly king.

Not least did these difficulties press upon the minds of the twelve apostles. Indeed, they felt them more strongly in proportion as they observed from a nearer point of view, and were most of all concerned to explain them satisfactorily. Others, the casual attendants on the preaching of Jesus, the more distant observers of his course, were at one time struck with transient conviction and would straightway have made him king,† but again were staggered by a difficulty and gave up their brief zeal for him and their

* Matt. xix. 25; Mark x. 26; Luke xviii. 26. † John vi. 15.

hopes for their nation. But his chosen twelve, who saw too closely and too constantly to doubt his heavenly mission, saw proportionately more that baffled their Jewish prejudices and defied their explanation. The evangelists often candidly remark that the disciples failed to understand, or that they even misunderstood, their Lord's meaning in the first instance, when he had expressed it in words that seem to us plain enough. But if we endeavour to place ourselves among Jews of that day, and to possess ourselves with Jewish expectations in espousing the cause of Jesus, their difficulties and mistakes will not seem altogether unnatural, nor the conduct of Jesus otherwise than most truthful while most considerate.

Among the ideas which they were least able or willing to receive, was that of their Master's *destined penal death*. Shortly before the scene of the transfiguration (in which his death is foreshewn), on the emphatic confession of Peter that he was the *Messiah*, Jesus (as already mentioned) charged them to tell no man that he was so. And he "began from that time to shew unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."* Up to this time, then, they had no idea of a suffering and dying Messiah. How did they receive the first announcement? Peter (how illustrative of his temperament!) is the only one who makes any observation, and he speaks but to deprecate, vehemently and passionately, such a thought: "Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord! This shall not be unto thee!" For which Peter is called by his Master "a Satan (tempter) and stumbling-block, savouring not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Another incident (which hap-

* See Matt. xvi. 21; Mark viii. 31; Luke ix. 21.

pened later) seems to imply not only that the idea of the Christ's death was strange to the minds of the apostles, but that there was a current saying, very religiously believed by the people in general, to the effect that the Messiah should not die at all, but be immortal in his kingdom on earth. For when Jesus spoke of being "lifted up from the earth and drawing all men unto him" (signifying what death he should die), some of the bystanders said: "We have heard out of the Law that Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest thou, The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" (John xii. 34.) What sanction this expectation derived from "the Law," or from any other part of the Old Testament, may be difficult to find. Probably this vague appeal to the Scriptures only illustrates the tendency of the mind to shelter its own wishes and prejudices behind powerful authority, if possible. The remark so made proves, however, that to the popular mind the idea of a suffering and dying Messiah—notwithstanding Isaiah's "Man of Sorrows," who "poured out his soul unto death"—was utterly foreign to the minds of our Lord's contemporaries, and that there was a prevailing legend to the effect that the Messiah would be immortal upon earth. How then should the fishermen on the lake of Galilee be exempt from the prevailing impression? Or how should the first announcement of an impending crucifixion be met with any other feelings than those of vague bewildering doubt, or earnest deprecation?

And just as little did they comprehend his announcement that he should "rise again from the dead." St. Mark tells us that, after the transfiguration, "as they came down from the mountain, he charged them to tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of Man were risen from the dead. And (he adds) they kept that saying with

themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean" (ix. 9, 10). What could it mean but what it says? we are ready to exclaim. But we know what the prediction meant, by the history of its accomplishment. And the apostles in due time learnt what it meant, when they saw their Lord alive again from the dead. But *till then* they did not understand his meaning. Not till his crucifixion did they believe, or even apprehend, that he would be put to a violent death, or perhaps that he would die at all. Luke tells us (ix. 45) that, on the day after the transfiguration, Jesus said to his disciples: "Let these sayings sink down into your ears; for the Son of Man shall be delivered into the hands of men. But (the evangelist goes on) they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them that they perceived it not; and they feared to ask him of that saying." On another occasion, on his last journey to Jerusalem (Luke xviii. 31), "he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them: Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated and spitted on; and they shall scourge him and put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again." How plain and minute the declaration! Yet the customary comment follows: "They understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken." That they did not understand these things, is indeed plain enough from their conduct at the time of the crucifixion, when, with the exception of the apostle John (who stood by the cross to the last, and received from his Lord the precious legacy of a son's duty to a mother), all the rest went to their own homes, and seem to have considered their hope of the redemption of

Israel as at an end, till the resurrection excited them in proportion as the crucifixion had dejected them.

Another fact is not a little remarkable, in connection with these announcements made by Jesus of his destined death, as illustrating the perplexed state of the apostles' minds. Not only did they miss his real meaning; they seem to have assigned to his words a specific false meaning, more in accordance with their own strong prepossessions. In close connection with his several announcements of his coming sufferings and death—most strange to say!—we find the apostles forthwith disputing among themselves “who shall be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. xviii. 1; Mark ix. 13; Luke ix. 46.) And it was after the most solemn of these announcements, on his way to Jerusalem, that the strange scene occurred (Matt. xx. 17; Mark x. 32), in which the apostles James and John (or their mother on their behalf) request that “they may sit, the one on his right hand, the other on his left, in his kingdom.” A strange occasion it seems for such a request,—when he had been announcing his coming sufferings and death,—that they should bespeak the first places in his glory! Well might he say to them, “Ye know not what ye ask!” What can we reasonably think they meant? Some have conjectured (and conjecture alone can help us) that the apostles not only did not realize, but that they misunderstood, misinterpreted, his plain announcements of his coming death; that they took in some widely figurative sense the words which were to be most literally fulfilled, and unreasonably (yet in their circumstances not quite unnaturally) explained away his meaning, so far as to fancy that by his death he only meant that he must undergo some great trials and difficulties, and by his resurrection that he should surmount them all, and then appear at length in his expected temporal power and glory. So irrepressible

in the nation and in individuals was this deeply cherished hope. Hence it might be explained (though not much to their credit even then) how, when he spoke to them of his coming death, they began to dispute for precedence in his kingdom. It was so to the last; even at the Passover table, where he washed their feet, to teach them humility and mutual service, and told them he had yet many things to say to them which they could not bear even then.

Thus it was the great practical work and difficulty of the mission of Jesus, from first to last, to make prominent the spiritual aspects of the Messiah's reign, and to put aside the temporal hope. He fulfilled and far surpassed the national idea in the former view, as he utterly disappointed it in the latter. He fulfilled the divine idea of progressive Religion, by transcending the Jewish hope.

The time soon came when his earthly life must close in outward ignominy, and only the spiritual attributes of his Messiahship would be discernible. Having thus far laboured to unteach, by word and act, men's gross notions of the Messiah, he must now make it manifest to the Jewish population assembled from all parts of their land and all parts of the world, that he really claims the character, and also claims to have that character interpreted henceforth, not according to their worldly imaginations, but according to the events of his own past life and coming death and resurrection, his own personal character and spiritual instructions.

He does this by an outward act, not by mere words; by an emblematic act, the meaning of which was understood at once by all those assembled multitudes; an act conspicuous to friends and foes, visible to thousands and talked of by thousands more, when the words of a verbal proclamation could only have been heard by hundreds. By his public entry into Jerusalem at the Passover, he publicly

claims to be recognized as the Messiah. His triumphal entry it is often called ; and indeed it was a triumph in its simple style, emblematic enough of the religious attributes of the Messiah's reign,—the beginning of a mightier and more enduring triumph than most of those imagined who sang : "Hosanna to the Son of David ! Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord !"

As we approach this point of the history, it is manifest at every step, alike in the growing earnestness of the friends of Jesus who urge him to declare himself openly, and in the ill-concealed anxiety of the priesthood to suppress his growing fame as a teacher and worker of miracles, that the whole country had become penetrated with a lively interest in his prophetic or Messianic claims. At this feast of the Passover, he is the universal topic of conversation. It is on every one's lips to ask, "Will he come up to the feast or will he not ?" And every one knows who is meant by *he*, without mentioning his name. (John xi. 56.) The chief priests and Pharisees perceive the prominence which his claims now occupy in the national mind, and have given commandment that if any man knows where he is, he should shew it, that they might take him. Could they have taken him privately, they would have hoped even yet to nip this Galilean heresy in the bud. But publicity will now be the safety of his religion, though the destruction of Jesus himself. He goes daily to Jerusalem (from Bethany, where he lodged with his friends and disciples, the family of Lazarus), and teaches in the courts and porches of the temple, thronged as they were with Jews from all parts. And to make it manifest to all that he does this expressly in the character of the Messiah who was to come, he publicly enters the city, on the first day of the feast, in the simple national style of the ancient Jewish monarchs, as

described by the prophet Zechariah (ix. 9) : "Fear not, daughter of Zion ; behold, thy king cometh, sitting on an ass's colt." And a truly national feeling soon pervaded the minds of the assembled multitudes, who spread their garments and branches of trees on the road, crying, "Hosanna to the king that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

The "cleansing of the Temple" followed ; when, in dismissing the traders from the sacred courts, Jesus is still understood to be exerting prophetic, if not distinctly Messianic authority, and is sustained in it by the zeal of those around him.*

The full meaning of this latter transaction is not generally appreciated, though long ago pointed out by Bishop Hurd, as expressing Christ's consciousness of the spirituality and comprehensiveness of his mission. The place of traffic was not the Temple itself, properly so called, but the outermost of its courts, known as the court of the Gentiles. This court surrounded the whole place, next within the outer wall, and no Gentile might go further. Next within the court of the Gentiles was the court of the Women, beyond which the Israelitish women might not go. Next came the courts of the Priests and of the Israelitish Men. And within all these was the Holy Place, or Temple proper, the innermost part of which was the Holy of Holies. In the court of the Gentiles the Jews of our Lord's day did not scruple to buy and sell animals for sacrifice, or to conduct other various traffic, such as was sure to be transacted somewhere in Jerusalem during a feast which brought people together from all the neighbouring countries. Looking upon the Gentiles as unclean

* According to John's Gospel, this occurred at our Lord's first passover. The time assigned by the other three is far more likely ; though it is quite possible that a less authoritative remonstrance may have been made on the previous occasion.

beings, they did not hesitate to use their court for these secular purposes. What interest had they, so long as they were Gentiles, in the holiness appropriate to God's people? Let them become proselytes according to the Law, and they might then come into the court of the Israelites!

But Jesus, the world's Messiah, looked upon the Gentiles from a wider point of view, as sheep of another but larger flock, whom he was to bring into the same pasture with the hitherto favoured people. This purpose he knew to be the foundation-plan of the Divine dispensations and the justification of the specialty with which the Jews had hitherto been treated. This purpose he saw, not only in the great open book of Providence, but in the pages of the Jewish prophets themselves, who frequently and plainly anticipate (what so many Jewish readers missed) the union of the Gentiles with them in equal religious privileges. While the Jews in general regarded this union as attainable only through the reception of their whole Law by Gentiles, Jesus the Messiah was preparing to abrogate that law of outward ordinances, and to proclaim spiritual worship and virtuous conduct as the everlasting law of righteousness for all alike. Did he not mean this in cleansing the court of the Gentiles? What a beautiful emphasis he puts upon Isaiah's words, "*My house* shall be called a house of prayer for all nations," when he uses them, not in reference to the holy place itself (which the Jews thought they kept scrupulously holy for their own services of worship), but as especially including the Gentiles' court, which they defiled without scruple, but he would keep as sacred as the rest! It is the same Messianic doctrine—so strange to Jewish exclusiveness, but so plain to Christian apprehension—which needed to be shewn to Peter long afterwards by special vision, in order to encourage him to accept the Gentile Cornelius as a Christian disciple. It is the same Messianic doctrine in virtue of

which we all stand up as children of the equal God, the Father of all mankind, whose temple is his Creation, whose true worship is praise and prayer, the heart's thankfulness, the heart's sorrow and the heart's trust,—whose service is our life.

CHAPTER V.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

THE *Kingdom of Heaven* and the *Kingdom of God* are terms of continual use in the New Testament to denote the Christian dispensation. John the Baptist declared that kingdom to be at hand ; Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom as actually come into the world. The Jews had long anticipated, under these terms, the reign of their temporal Messiah ; Jesus by these terms expressed the actual sway of his gospel, whatever that was designed by him to be.

Did he mean to assert for himself outward power or authority ? Did he promulgate an elaborate legislation ? Did he attempt to found a distinct society, and lay down absolute rules for its guidance ? Did he frame a political constitution of any kind ? Did he found and legislate for a new theocracy ? Did he imagine to himself, and endeavour to realize, any visible or outward Messianic kingdom ? Did he even organize his disciples into a society or church, and call that the kingdom of heaven ? Or did he, by that phrase, express the heavenly principles of his religion, its moral and devotional influences, and these alone ? Does the gospel kingdom consist simply in the prevalence of the religion of Jesus in men's hearts and lives ? Is the kingdom of heaven equivalent to the sway of pure religion ?

The gospel histories must supply the answer to these

inquiries. They will shew us that the Jewish conception of the Messiah's kingdom upon earth required, and received at the touch of Jesus of Nazareth, as much modification as the idea of his personal character and acts.

The enthusiasm with which men followed their own rude ideas at the first hint that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, is remarked upon by Jesus himself to his disciples: "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."* "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."† That rude pressure, natural under the circumstances, gradually abated, in proportion as his mission came to be, negatively if not positively, understood. To the demand of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he replied: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation" (which may either mean, *not with outward pomp and splendour*, or not so as to be observed when it comes); "neither shall men say, Lo! it is here, or, Lo! it is there; for behold, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke xvii. 20, 21.)

When, before Pilate, Jesus "witnessed his good confession," being charged by the Jewish rulers with making himself a king,‡ he replied explicitly: "My kingdom is *not of this world*. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants have fought that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence" (not from such a source). Pilate, evidently perplexed, and wishing to induce his prisoner to explain his

* Matt. xi. 12.

† Luke xvi. 16.

‡ The Sanhedrim had already condemned him for blasphemy, in having called himself the Son of God. But as Pilate (whose consent to a capital sentence was necessary) could not comprehend this technical Jewish accusation, they proceed to charge him with treason against the Roman emperor, in having called himself a king.

own pretensions, pursues : "So then thou art a king? And Jesus answered, Thou sayest truly; for I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth hearkeneth to my voice." Though Pilate sneered at the idea of a kingdom of truth, he was satisfied that this answer was a virtual repudiation of outward royalty, and said, "I find in him no fault at all;" and then tried to release him as the accustomed yearly offering of the judgment-seat to popular favour. (John xviii. 33—40.)

Intermediately, throughout our Lord's ministry, his instructions are largely devoted to the description, if we may not say definition, of the kingdom of heaven.

In the Sermon on the Mount, he describes pretty fully who are its subjects and what its characteristics. The Beatitudes with which that discourse opens, declare in so many words that the poor and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake belong to it; and they imply it also as regards the mourners, the meek, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peace-makers. (Matt. v. 3—12.) The kingdom thus initiated is manifestly a kingdom of heavenly virtues. Strict virtue is its essential requirement. None can enter it whose righteousness does not far exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees; and the greatest in that kingdom shall be he who best keeps and teaches the moral law (17—20). The sayings of men of old time, and even of the Jewish law itself, are passed in review by this new Teacher with authority, and made to shine with clearer light on human duty. The chief thing of all is, to seek the kingdom of God and its righteousness; and then he that truly seeks it may trust that enough of worldly good shall be added to him (vi. 33). To say to this great Teacher, Lord, Lord,

is no sufficient sign of membership; but to do the will of the Father in heaven (vii. 21).

In this same comprehensive discourse, Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray. He gave them a form of prayer which has proved appropriate for all times, yet in which we naturally look for some traces of what might have a special meaning to them. The first petition in the Lord's prayer is, that the kingdom of God may come, and (consequently) His will be done on earth as in heaven. What does this petition imply as to the nature of that kingdom? In one sense, indeed, the kingdom of God, on earth and through the universe, is always in full sway. "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endureth to all generations." "All things are his servants, and continue unto this day according to his ordinances." This describes the material or physical government of the Creator. But the mental or spiritual rule, which is identical with the reign of virtue and religion in men's lives, is a sway never absolute or complete, but always progressive. It is this spiritual kingdom of God, for the progress of which Jesus teaches his disciples to pray. This kingdom of God comes, in proportion as practical religion guides the conduct and blesses the hearts of men. And if the phrase which might appropriately denote the government of God over his whole creation in matter and mind, is more pointedly descriptive of his sway over the reasoning and accountable part of his creatures, it is most of all appropriate to the influence of those religious beliefs, principles and hopes, which were communicated to the human race by Jesus Christ. The petition, Thy kingdom come, while expressing the Christian's desire for the prevalence of goodness and happiness in every way among men, denotes, and is meant to denote, his expectation of these results more specifically through the spread of his Master's

religion. This would be the kingdom of God on earth. The sign of its advance is when the will of God is done more truly,—on earth as in heaven. This kingdom “cometh not with observation ; it is within men.”

A large number of our Lord’s parables are devoted to the illustration of the spiritual nature of the Messiah’s kingdom. Those which he uttered, by the side of the lake of Galilee, on what is appropriately called “the day of parables,” are all connected with this subject. (Matt. xiii.; Mark iv.; Luke viii.) They are as follows :

- The Sower, whose seed falls on every kind of soil, and produces, or fails to produce, accordingly ;
- The Tares, or weeds, sown among the wheat, which grow up with it, but are separated at the harvest ;
- The Seed cast into the ground, that springs and grows up, man knows not how, night and day ;
- The grain of Mustard-seed, so small, growing into a large tree-like plant ;
- The Leaven, spreading through a large mass of meal and leavening it all ;
- The man who, finding hidden Treasure in a field, sells all he has and buys that field ;
- The Pearl-merchant who ventures all he has upon one pearl of great value ;
- The Net cast into the sea, bringing up fish of all kinds, the good to be retained, the bad to be cast away.

The kingdom of heaven is compared to all these things in turn. And these parables all variously imply the inward, the mental, moral and spiritual nature of the Messiah’s work ; its value beyond price ; its destined quiet growth from small beginnings to great results ; its discrimination between the good and bad in human character and conduct.

After Jesus had spoken the first of these parables, his

disciples asked him pointedly, why he used this mode of instruction, and his reply is again illustrative of our subject of inquiry. He says the reason is, that he is discoursing on the *mysteries* of the kingdom of heaven, that is, its *secret*, unknown, unexpected characteristics, those which the Jewish people were not prepared to welcome, scarcely to understand. To his disciples it is given (he says) to know these mysteries; but to the mixed multitude around they can only be hinted in the similitudes of story and familiar objects. The intelligent and spiritual-minded will reach the implied meaning of the comparisons, while to the indifferent and dull they will remain mere parables of unknown meaning, or none at all. No one can be effectively taught beyond his capacity to learn, "as (in the words of a quaint old writer) a vessel cannot hold more than its measure, though you fill it from the sea."

Besides this connected series of parables, there are many others which similarly illustrate the nature of the kingdom of heaven, its *mysterious* spirituality and comprehensiveness of purpose. Thus the parable of the *Good Shepherd* claims for Jesus no authority but that of a spiritual instructor, and plainly declares that his mission is to reach other sheep, not of the Jewish fold; that is, the Gentiles. (John x. 1—18.) The *Invitation slighted* (Luke xiv. 15—) plainly foretels the rejection of the gospel by the Jews in general, and its acceptance by the Gentiles. And other parables, with the same general meaning, such as the *Labourers in the Vineyard* (Matt. xx.), the *Barren Fig-tree* (Luke xiii. 6), the *Two Sons* (Matt. xxi. 28), defy the idea that he who spoke them contemplated the erection of an outward administration. They illustrate rather the eternal principles of the Divine moral government.

The instructions given by Jesus to his apostles when he sent them out to preach that "the kingdom of heaven

is at hand" (Matt. x.), and the similar precepts to the seventy disciples (Luke x.), contain no hint of anything but moral and religious influence as constituting his kingdom. Nor must it be forgotten, with what emphasis, both in approval of the ingenuous young ruler and in conversation with the scribes, he proclaims the two great commandments of the Law, love to God and love to man, to be the sole conditions of the eternal life promised by his gospel.* His instructions are indeed uniformly and altogether moral and devotional; they are religious lessons, informal and unsystematic, but aiming to make the tree good, so that the fruit may be good also. How should such a teacher have contemplated an outward visible kingdom? It did not come with observation. Men did not say, Lo, it is here; Lo, it is there; but it was among them and within them all the while.

But the *Coming of the Kingdom of Heaven* is also made by our Lord to bear a more special meaning, which is derived from and included in the general idea of the spread of his pure and benevolent religion. He uses the phrase in anticipation of the fall of an older kingdom of God on earth; to denote, in short, the *destined end of the Jewish economy*, and the consequent progress of the Christian religion; *the end of the Jewish age (not of the physical world), the real opening of the Christian age*. This period was distinctly in the prophetic thought of Jesus nearly forty years before its completion, and he foretold it repeatedly during his ministry, and most emphatically and in fullest detail just before its close. Matthew (x. 23) records that, when he first commissioned his apostles to preach the gospel, he used this expression: "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come." After Peter had made his confession that Jesus is the Messiah,

* Matt. xix. 16, xxii. 35; Mark x. 17, xii. 28; Luke x. 25, xviii. 18.

the latter warned his followers that they must be ready to deny themselves and take up the cross, not counting their mortal lives dear compared with the life of their souls. He announced a sure retribution to every man according to his works, and then added these remarkable and emphatic words: “Verily, there be some standing here who shall not taste of death, till they see the *Son of Man coming in his kingdom*” (Matt. xvi. 28; Luke ix. 27). Mark expresses it thus: “Till they have *seen the kingdom of God come with power*” (ix. 1). He plainly points to the destruction of the Jewish city and polity as about to take place within the limits of the then living generation. The kingdom of God —of the Son of Man—of the Messiah—was to come with power on the cessation of the ancient Jewish peculiarity. That would be the clearest parting-line between the old dispensation and the new, between the Law and the Gospel; between the local, national and temporary institutions of Judaism, and the world-wide spiritual religion of the Gospel. Then his kingdom would really come,—come with power. Then Messiah would come in his kingdom. Then would be the End of the Age.

In this sense and with reference to that future period, Jesus, on another occasion, met the thought of some who expected that the kingdom of God should *immediately appear*. (Luke xix. 11.) “He added and spake a parable because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.” The parable was that of the ten pounds intrusted by a nobleman to his ten servants to take care of, while he “went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.” So he also describes this distant coming of the kingdom of God, as his own coming, the coming of the Son of Man, his coming in glory *at the end of the age*,*—not the *end of*

* συντελέα τὸν διῶρος.

the world, as inappropriately translated in the common version. Of course we must regard this as figurative language, and not as designed to predict (what certainly did not happen) the personal manifestation of Jesus in the destruction of Jerusalem. No doubt, many expected (as we shall have occasion afterwards to shew) a personal return of Jesus to earth, at that time, and at other times both before and after; but if his own declarations can be fairly taken as simply predicting the coming of the kingdom of heaven with power at the end of the Jewish age, and not as necessarily implying his personal advent, the interpretation here suggested is the most reverent to him as well as the most appropriate to fact.

Thus we approach our Lord's most full and emphatic prediction, that the kingdom of heaven shall come with power in the end of the Jewish age. In the Messianic point of view, his prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem is of striking and supreme importance. It is not free from serious difficulties; but, with the reflected light of subsequent history, it ought to become clear in its general bearings at any rate.

CHAPTER VI.

THE END OF THE AGE AND COMING OF THE KINGDOM.

FOR six days preceding his last Passover, Jesus taught openly in the Temple at Jerusalem, in the clear consciousness that his ministry was about to end together with his mortal life. To many parables of a corresponding general import, he added his fullest and most distinct prediction respecting the Messianic kingdom.

This solemn prophecy of the fall of Jerusalem, the end of the age and the coming of the kingdom of God, occupies some of the later chapters of the first three Gospels. (Matt. xxiv.; Mark xiii.; Luke xxi.) As he left the Temple on the last day of his teaching there, when some of the disciples pointed with pride to its massive structure and "goodly stones and gifts," he briefly replied : "See ye not all these things ? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." (Matt. xxiv. 2.) As he sat on the Mount of Olives soon after, he fully detailed to them his meaning, in reply to their inquiry, "Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the age ?" His words, in reply, as reported by all the three evangelists, are (as all interpreters agree) most faithfully descriptive of the destruction of Jerusalem, as it historically took place under Titus, A.D. 70, that is, about 38 years after the prophecy was spoken. False Christs, he warns them, will come, and will deceive many ;

wars, pestilences, earthquakes, famines, will be heard of in many places ; the Christian disciples will be persecuted ; false prophets will arise ; but he that endures to the end will be delivered. The gospel of the kingdom shall first be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations ; and then the end shall come. But when Jerusalem shall be compassed with armies, and the abomination of desolation (the Roman standards) shall be set up in the Holy place, then those who have believed these prophetic warnings will flee from Judea (as the Christians, in fact, did when the time came). Even then, if any one should say, Lo, here is Christ, or there ; let no credit be given to the report. But, the prophecy proceeds in these remarkable words :

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken ; and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven ; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn ; and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matt. xxiv. 29—31.) It is added with great emphasis : "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away ; but my words shall not pass away." And the earnest warning follows : "Watch, therefore ; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." This limitation of time to the *then existing generation* is expressed in all the three Gospels, and requires us to interpret the prediction accordingly. The destruction of Jerusalem did happen before all the then living persons had passed away. But is there

not some difficulty in interpreting certain of these expressions as having been fulfilled in the history of those days ? Are they suitable to such circumstances ? We must meet the question openly and not evade the difficulty.

As to those strong expressions about the darkening of the sun, moon, &c., the careful reader of the Bible can scarcely need to be informed that they are customary figures of speech, bold but of frequent occurrence, by which the Hebrew prophets described any great earthly calamity. It is enough for him to look through the prophet Joel, who, in predicting calamities to come upon Jerusalem from an invading army, three times uses the figure in question : "The earth shall quake before them ; the heavens shall tremble ; the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining." "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Eternal come." "The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining." (Joel ii. 10, 31, iii. 15.) So there is no difficulty thus far, though the figure is, no doubt, a very bold one to Western ears. But how shall we understand "the sign of the Son of Man in heaven ;" and his being "seen coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory ;" and "sending his angels to gather his elect from the four winds" ? Can all this be explained figuratively as intended to denote the new vigour of the Messiah's spiritual kingdom on the decline of the Jewish economy ? Either we must think so (which is difficult*); or we must think that the prediction has in these particulars failed ; or (a more

* Yet compare Matt. xxvi. 64. In reply to Pilate's solemn appeal, "I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God," Jesus saith unto him, "Thou hast said right ; nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

likely theory perhaps) that it has received some degree of unconscious colouring from the historian's Messianic thought in recording what he remembered of the prophecy of Jesus. What more easy to imagine than that, in recording Christ's prophecy of the spiritual coming of his kingdom, a Jewish disciple should innocently and involuntarily have tinged the record of his Master's words with his own prepossessions? Nay; how could it well be otherwise?

This critical question is not one of mere curiosity. It connects itself closely with that of the early origin and authenticity of the first three Gospels, in a way that is highly interesting, and important to their general credibility. For, if they were indeed written *before* the end of the Jewish age, it is quite conceivable that those who recorded Christ's prophecy of the more decided coming of his kingdom as the destined result of Jerusalem's overthrow, might have so closely identified in their minds the thought of his personal reign with their own expectation of his kingdom, as to have made it part of his prophecy without being conscious of the addition. If they have done this, it would seem an irrefragable proof that they wrote their histories *before Jerusalem was destroyed*. Had these Gospels not been written till the second century (as some modern critics fancy), it seems incredible that the writers should then have gratuitously inserted in Christ's prediction what they must have known had not been literally fulfilled in the result. That he did not *personally* come in that event which is called his "coming again" and the "coming of his kingdom with power," is historically the fact. But that he was expected again and again, we shall have many occasions still of tracing in the history. That he had promised a *personal* return, which never was fulfilled in fact, is not to be lightly believed by any reverential disciple. But that his Jewish evangelists, writing some years before

the destruction of Jerusalem, should, in perfect simplicity, have made his prophecy to include their own expectation of his personal return to his kingdom, is not difficult to understand, unless we were trammelled by the obsolete theory of plenary verbal inspiration. So, in this little obscurity of the record, we may read the critical proof that these three Gospels were written before the overthrow of Jerusalem. It is a most important internal proof of their antiquity, and so far of their authorship.

The customary interpretation of our Lord's prophecy supposes him to pass on (without any clear mark of such a transition) from predicting the fall of Jerusalem to describing the future judgment of all mankind after death. In Mark and Luke, indeed, there is very little to bear this interpretation. But in Matthew another whole chapter follows, to which there is nothing parallel in the other two. This twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew represents the kingdom of heaven under the several parables of the Ten Virgins, the Talents, and the Shepherd separating his sheep from the goats. And it is these added parables in Matthew, rather than anything that the three evangelists have in common, that have chiefly led to the idea of our Lord having mixed up the two subjects—in themselves so wide apart—of his coming in the destruction of Jerusalem, and his coming to judge mankind after the end of the world.

Perhaps these three parables might be more consistently explained as representing the abiding principles of the Messiah's kingdom upon earth, and so virtually reaching on to the great retributions of a future life, rather than as violently passing from the scenery of the falling Jerusalem to that of a Last Judgment. At all events, it is the plain doctrine of Jesus, when claiming to be the Messiah, that the kingdom of heaven shall come with power upon the

cessation of the Jewish economy. And the record of history shews his prediction fulfilled. Before his own generation had passed away, Judaism ceased to be. Its peculiar ceremonial was necessarily suspended (as on certain previous occasions it had been) by the destruction of its Temple. And this suspension has not, like previous ones, been limited by prophecy or by fact as yet. Eighteen centuries have since passed, and its Temple worship has never been restored. Its ceremonial has all these centuries been impossible. Judaism itself has thus been compelled to become a spiritual religion,—or rather, to develope its spiritual principles while letting go its chief ceremonies. And a spiritual gospel has been offered to Jew and Gentile alike, throwing down the barriers of exclusion.

An able American writer thus paraphrases our Lord's words on the occasion in question :

“The Mosaic dispensation is about to be closed in the fearful tribulations of the day of the Lord, and my dispensation to be set up. When you see Jerusalem encompassed with armies, know that the day is at hand, and flee to the mountains; for not one stone shall be left upon another. Then the power of God will be shewn on my behalf, and the sign of the Son of Man be seen in heaven. My truths shall prevail, and shall be owned as the criteria of Divine judgment. Some of those standing here shall not taste death till all these things be fulfilled. Then it will be seen that I am the Messiah, and that through the eternal principles of truth which I have proclaimed, I shall sit upon a throne of glory,—not literally, in person, as you thought, blessing the Jews and cursing the Gentiles, but spiritually, in the truth, dispensing joy to good men and woe to bad men, according to their deserts. Such we believe to be the meaning of Christ's own predictions of his second coming.”*

* Alger's *Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life*, p. 390.

So the kingdom of heaven came when Jerusalem fell. But only in this sense, and in the sense of the fulfilment of his solemn prophecy in that event, was it a fact that Jesus "came in his kingdom." It was in this sense that Jesus said to Peter, after his resurrection, when predicting the distant fate of his apostle John, "If I will that he tarry *till I come*, what is that to thee?" (John xxi. 22.) John survived the destruction of Jerusalem, which no other of the apostles is known or believed to have done. From these words of the Master, the report went abroad, "that that disciple should not die;" and, by the strangest legendary confusion of fact and thought, the prediction was afterwards believed to have been uttered as a curse upon a Jew who had reviled Jesus when carrying his cross. And thence came the strange and malignant story of the Wandering Jew!

CHAPTER VII.

THE EXPECTATION OF CHRIST'S SECOND COMING.

WE have seen how the expectation of Christ's return to earth after his resurrection and ascension, makes its appearance in the record of his prophecy of the End of the Age, as preserved by the first three evangelists. Its actual prevalence in the minds of the early Christians is historically traceable in the book of the Acts and in many of the Epistles.

In Acts i. 6—11, Luke states that, after our Lord's resurrection, when for forty days he shewed himself to his disciples, "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God," they asked him on one occasion this abrupt and Jewish-sounding question: "Lord, wilt thou at this time *restore again the kingdom to Israel?*" Nothing could be more decisive of the pertinacity with which the idea of the worldly Messianic kingdom had laid hold of the Jewish mind, than that his selected disciples,—who had attended his ministry, had heard his words and observed his conduct, in all which he continually deprecated that idea and aimed at the substitution of a spiritual one in its place,—who had seen him die upon the cross, which they had before thought impossible, and now saw him risen from the dead to their equal surprise,—that these men should revert at once to their old worldly idea of an Israelitish kingdom, instead of rising with his person and doctrine to a true kingdom of heaven. What should he say to such impracticable prepossessions?

They had not yet mastered these “mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.” But they shall soon be endowed with the Holy Spirit, and empowered to attest what they have seen.

He said unto them: It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

And then we read:

When he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

To the thoughtful interpreter this account is full of difficulty; and there is no help to be had from comparison with the works of the other evangelists. Matthew and John (the two who were apostles) give no account whatever of a visible ascension. Mark only says: “After the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God;” which seems rather to record an inference of the writer’s mind than a scene which he had beheld. Luke alone, of all the four, attempts to present the scene to the eye. In his Gospel he says (xxiv. 50, 51): “And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up

into heaven." In his introduction to the Acts, he enlarges his narrative, as just quoted.

A modern scientific reader must necessarily feel it difficult even to realize this description as a literal event, though the difficulty was not felt by those to whom heaven was an actual place above the clouds. If most literally interpreted, it can only tell us that a cloud hid the Master from his disciples' last gaze; and this was taken as a symbol or emblem of his departure to the heavenly state. There is no use in our speculating (as many have done) on the mode of his bodily existence during the forty days after his resurrection, or on the manner and moment of his transition to immortality. Nor need we inquire who the two men in white garments were, and what authority they had for saying (or indeed what they meant by saying), "This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall *so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*" One thing only is clear (and that is what concerns our present inquiry), that the expectation of Christ's personal, bodily, visible and literal return to earth is represented by Luke as firmly fixed in the minds of his apostles immediately after his resurrection. They believe he will come back from heaven to set up the still delayed kingdom of Israel.

The book of Acts supplies further intimations of this lingering belief.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (ch. ii.) is claimed by Peter as proof of the resurrection and the Messiahship of Jesus (ver. 36), and as the fulfilment of the prophetic promise for "the last days" (17). Perhaps his allusion to the coming of "*the great and notable day of the Lord*" (20) points to the expected coming *again*.

When Peter and John (ch. iii.) have cured the lame man who asked alms at the *Beautiful Gate*, and Peter

explains to the wondering bystanders that the miracle was done by no power or holiness of their own, but through the name of Jesus and through faith in his name, he expresses some vague thoughts of a coming *restitution of all things* through the return of *Christ from heaven*:

Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the *times of refreshing* shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until the *times of restitution of all things*, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began (19—21).

No wonder that the interpreters should be perplexed with the *times of refreshing* and the *restitution of all things*. “The double aspect,” commonly ascribed to Christ’s prophecy in Matthew xxiv., only perplexes what is plain enough, if we admit that the early disciples expected his personal return.* But Peter declares the fulfilment of the divine promises in their fullest extent by Jesus Christ:

Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. * * * Yea, and all the

* “Since Pentecost the apostles have grown wiser than when they asked, Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? They now endeavour to remove from others that false expectation which till lately they entertained themselves. There is however some ground for the opinion of Olshausen and others, that they were still unacquainted with the double aspect of the prophecies contained in ch. xxiv. of St. Matthew, and that they thought their own generation was not to pass away till those predictions should have been entirely and once for all fulfilled.” (Humphry’s *Commentary on the Acts*, 1854.) They might well be unacquainted with any such *double aspect*, no such thing having been hinted.

prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities (22—26).

In other places the apostles express their firm belief in the active agency of the risen Saviour, but without hinting that they expect his personal return to earth. (See v. 31, 32.) Yet the Jewish opponents accuse Stephen (vi. 14) of having said that Jesus of Nazareth will destroy the temple and change the customs which Moses delivered. In the general preaching of the apostles, so far as it is reported in the book of Acts, the idea of the personal return soon ceases to make itself prominent. They preach the living God, and exhort men to turn from idol vanities. They preach that Jesus is the Christ. They preach through Jesus the resurrection of the dead. They testify both to Jews and Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And they describe this as "preaching the *kingdom of God*" (xx. 25). Paul, in his examination before Felix (xxiv.), and afterwards before Festus and Agrippa (xxvi.), details his Jewish faith and Christian conversion, and sums up his work and purpose as an apostle by saying: "Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people and unto the

Gentiles" (xxvi. 22, 23). In all this there is no allusion to the expected personal reign of Christ. Still it entered vividly into the belief of Paul, for a while at least, and of other New Testament writers, as the examination of the Epistles will shew.

We take Paul's letters first; and they shall be considered in the order in which they are believed to have been written.

LETTERS TO THE THESSALONIANS (written about A.D. 52 and 53 from Corinth, shortly after the apostle's visit to Athens—Acts xviii. 1). These letters, the earliest of Paul's existing writings, are very strongly marked with the expectation of "the day of the Lord." In the first, a short letter of five chapters, there are four allusions, as it were in passing, and one long and earnest appeal founded upon the belief, and expressing it very vividly. The apostle puts upon record how the Thessalonian disciples had "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his *Son from heaven*, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivered us from the wrath to come" (i. 9, 10). Again, he says: "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, *at his coming?*" (ii. 19). And (iii. 12, 13): "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another and toward all men, even as we do towards you; to the end he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.*" And (v. 23) he prays, "that your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless *unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" His mind is evidently full of the expectation of Christ's personal manifestation, which expresses itself thus incidentally, yet so often. His more

deliberate and, we may say, expository avowal of the belief, is as follows :

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that *we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord*, shall not prevent (precede, anticipate or be before) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God ; and the dead in Christ shall rise first ; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air ; and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. (1 Thess. iv. 13—18.)

To this confident and minutely pictured expectation, however, St. Paul cautiously adds in the next verses (v. 1, 2) : "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the *day of the Lord so cometh* as a thief in the night."

It is plain from this Epistle and from the second to the same church, that the disciples were expecting, with some degree of urgency, the speedy second coming of Christ ; and that, whatever else they might understand by that phrase, they expected his *personal* presence and a new order of things in the world thenceforth. They seem to have imagined some wonderful change as at hand, which would transform the mortal state of man into its immortal state ; and,—as has often since been the case, when some

enthusiastic belief of coming millennial or heavenly change has prevailed,—this belief was abused by many to the neglect of their worldly callings and duties. (See 2 Thess. iii. 6—15.) The passage just quoted shews that it was a matter of affectionate anxiety with some of the Thessalonians to have lost their relatives or friends by death *before the coming of Christ*. How sad, that they should, by a few weeks, or months, or years, have failed of seeing the kingdom of God! Such was the regretful thought of the survivors.

It is observable that the Jewish Messianic belief included a vague expectation of the *resurrection of true Israelites departed*, who should join the earthly kingdom. (See Dan. xii. 1, 2; Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.)* This idea must have been very vague and confused, mixing up the temporal with the spiritual idea of the kingdom of God, and also confounding the kingdom of the Messiah on earth with the future life. But are we surprised at these confusions? Let us only imagine ourselves on the spot at the time, and we may feel how real the thing is. As Paul represents it, while regulating and restraining it, we feel that it was the urgent belief of the time.

Paul's object is (and a very important practical object) to convince his friends that those who may be alive (as he expects some of them will be) at the *coming of Christ*, will have no precedence or advantage over those who sleep (who are already dead). And his imaginative description of the scene expected, is very vivid and powerful. It does all that genius and enthusiasm could do to make a mistaken idea real. But it is evidently founded upon the then prevalent mistake as to a *coming kingdom of Christ*, or day of the Lord. No one can say that the apostolic expectation, as here expressed, was realized, or ever has

* See Alger's *Doctrine of a Future Life*, p. 170.

been since. It was a mistake,—of religious earnestness and enthusiasm,—historically explainable. Paul plainly expected a personal second coming of Christ in his own lifetime. And his object is, to convince his friends that those who shall be alive at the coming of Christ, will have no benefit, through that mere accident, over those already dead. A true moral and Christian belief, applying itself to merely imaginary conditions then strongly believed.

But the most curious and interesting thing to observe is, how, in St. Paul's successive letters to the Christian churches, there is *continually less and less* of this very definite but mistaken belief. Just as he seems to have brought it naturally with him, as a zealous Jew, into his ardent faith in Jesus as the Messiah, so he seems rapidly to leave it behind him in his preaching of the great and everlasting truths of the gospel. This is a highly interesting aspect of St. Paul's progressive belief. Many critics have noted his Jewish prepossession; few have marked how he outgrew it.*

The second letter to the Thessalonians was written a few months after the first, with a view still further to discourage the injurious notion that the *day of the Lord* was close at hand,—though not to retract the picture he had drawn of that impending day. In chapter ii, the apostle tells them that it is not coming yet, and that various signs will precede it;—that there will previously be a falling away of disciples; and that a *Man of Sin* will be revealed, sitting

* The chief difficulty of the above passage, to a simple Bible-reading Christian, will be, in observing that Paul prefaces his description with the declaration, "This I say unto you by the word of the Lord." But in the face of the utter failure of Paul's Messianic expectation, we must not needlessly take his ideas as express revelations from the Lord; but rather take him to mean, that he says it in the spirit of the impartial gospel. And truly it is said in the spirit of the gospel, though on the assumption of a mistaken Jewish expectation.

in the temple of God as if he were divine ; that the "mystery of iniquity is already working," but is held back by some one who hindereth and "will hinder till he be taken out of the way ;" after which it will fully manifest itself, and then the "Lord will destroy it with the brightness of his coming." The most likely interpretation of these mysterious utterances is, that St. Paul, earnestly watching the signs of the times, especially the attitude of the Roman government towards the Christian Church, and expecting soon to see the kingdom of God outwardly manifested, regarded the reigning emperor Claudius (an old man) as "him that hindered for a while" the gathering mischief, and Nero as "the Man of Sin ready to be manifested," and to bring matters to the final crisis. A true estimate, indeed, of the moderate government of the one, and the reckless character of the other ; but certainly not an exact prophecy of anything that really happened. Nor did the actual crisis come in the fall of Jerusalem till 16 or 17 years later. (Read 2 Thess. ii.)

The apostle again (iii. 5) exhorts his Thessalonian friends to "the patient waiting for Christ," and reproves that "disorderly walking," that neglect of the common duties of men's callings, which often characterizes the days of religious excitement and expectation.

Such are Paul's earliest recorded thoughts on the *Coming of the Day of the Lord*.

THE LETTERS TO THE CORINTHIANS were written full four years later, A.D. 57 ; the first, in the spring of that year, from Ephesus ; the second, in the autumn from Macedonia. The expected coming of Christ is repeatedly alluded to still, though not nearly so often in proportion as previously. "I thank God" (the apostle says) * * * "that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the *coming of our Lord Jesus*

Christ, who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (i. 7, 8). "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come" (iv. 5); "That the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (v. 5); "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (vi. 2); "These things are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world (of the ages, rather) are come" (x. 11);—all these passing expressions betoken the prevailing thought, which is yet again expressed where the common version disguises it (xvi. 22), "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha." With a stop after Anathema, and on translating the Greek and Syriac words into English, the apostle really says, "Let him be separated from you. *Our Lord cometh.*" Perhaps the same meaning is implied in the quotation from Isaiah, in 2 Cor. vi. 2: "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." The time is evidently considered urgent.

But there are more important passages in these Epistles to the Corinthians; such as, having reference to death and the future life, naturally come into comparison with those already quoted from the letters to Thessalonica, in which the future life seemed inextricably mixed up with the personal coming of Christ at the end of the age.

In the fine chapter (1 Cor. xv.) which forms part of the English burial service, the apostle first addresses himself (ver. 12) to the sceptical philosophers who altogether denied the possibility of a resurrection from the dead. He disproves their universal negative by the particular affirmative of Christ's well-attested, actual resurrection. He then (ver. 35) turns to their difficulty of conceiving how the dead are raised, and points, as poetically as argumentatively, to

the inexhaustible resources of creative power, in reproof of the dull doubt *how it can be*. And in this argument the expectation of Christ's kingdom twice finds mention (in the passages marked below by *italics*). In both instances (just as in the letters to the Thessalonians) the idea is implied, of the revival of the dead and the transformation of the living at the coming of Christ during the then existing generation,—“*We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.*” But every reader must perceive that the idea of the immortal life is much more simply prominent, and the imagined circumstances and scenery of the great change much less so. We observe also that the Messiah's kingdom itself is expected to come to an end with, or soon after, this manifestation.

But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. *Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;* when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. *For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.* For He hath put all things under his feet. But when it saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that He is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all. (1 Cor. xv. 23—28.)

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery: *we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,* in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the *dead* shall be

raised *incorruptible*, and *we shall be changed*. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. xv. 50—57.)

In the second letter to the Corinthians (iv. 13—v. 10), there is again a passage in immediate reference to the future life, which is intirely free from these perplexing local and temporal attributes, shewing us the progress of the apostle's mind:

We, having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, *I believed, and therefore have I spoken*; we also believe and therefore speak; knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved (if this earthly tent of ours were

taken down), we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this (tent) we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed-upon with our house which is from heaven (if so be that, being clothed, we shall not be found naked). For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened : not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed-upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

Now He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight);—we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Is it not plain that the apostle's Christian belief in immortality throws his Messianic idea more and more into the shade ? He began with expecting to be caught up in the clouds and meet the Lord in the air ; he now expects a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens ; and labours that, whether present or absent, he may be accepted of the Lord, anticipating the judgment-seat of Christ, where every one will receive according as he has done, whether good or bad.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS (probably written from Corinth in the winter of A.D. 57-8) has for its object to vindicate the freedom of Gentile Christians from the obligations of the Jewish law. It contains no allusion to the

second coming of Christ,—the apostle's mind was full of more immediate practical interests and duties,—but it gives us instead these fine declarations of responsibility and retribution :

Be not deceived ; God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well-doing ; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. (Gal. vi. 7—9.)

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS (from Corinth, A.D. 58) is mainly devoted to the same great topic as that to the Galatians, namely, Gentile liberty and equality with the long-favoured nation, in the new kingdom of God. The only clear allusion to the expected coming of Christ is in ch. xiii. 11 : "Now it is high time to awake out of sleep ; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." The expected approach of the last days is clearly marked in these words. Possibly the same thought may be contained in ii. 16 : "The day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel ;" but the actual belief involved is very vague. The judgment may be inward and spiritual, so far as these expressions can decide.

THE LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS, written when the apostle was a prisoner at Rome (as were also the next three mentioned letters), contains no allusion to the second coming; but speaks of Christians *as already translated into the kingdom of Christ* (i. 13). The apostle also speaks of all things *both in heaven and earth* as having been created in Christ, through him and for him, and all things, *whether*

in heaven and earth, as being reconciled to God by his cross (i. 16, 20). If the things in heaven and earth mean (as judicious interpreters have maintained) the Jews and the Gentiles respectively, this Epistle prominently presents the idea of the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah as actually in operation. In iii. 1, the apostle speaks of Christ as "sitting on the right hand of God;" which again seems to regard his kingdom as already established upon earth without display of his personal sovereignty. The Jewish Messianic idea seems to be fast vanishing from the apostle's mind, and the spiritual to take its place.

THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON, of Colosse, which was sent with the above as a private letter to a friend, does not happen to contain any allusion to the coming of the Lord.

THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS (A.D. 62), which was perhaps a circular letter to several churches, contains no allusion to the subject of our inquiry, unless this (iv. 30) be considered one: "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the *day of redemption*." In v. 5: "The kingdom of Christ and of God" seems to be quite equivalent to the idea of the company or church of Christians or believers. As in the Colossians, *things in heaven and earth* are already gathered together in one through Christ (i. 10); and those near and far off sit together *in heavenly places* (ii. 6).

EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS (A.D. 62, Rome). Paul prays that his friends may be sincere and without offence *in the day of Christ* (i. 10). In allusion to the doubt how his imprisonment may end, he says (21—24):

For, to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But,
if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour:
yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a

strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

It is remarkable that here is no reference to the expected visible coming of Christ, but rather the idea of his own departing and so being with Christ, in the alternative of living or dying.

In ch. iii. 20, 21, Paul says :

Our conversation (or rather, our citizenship) is in heaven ; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

In iv. 5, he says, "The Lord is at hand." The belief of the personal coming still holds ground ; but how modestly, how retiringly, by comparison !

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES (as those to Timothy and Titus are called) contribute little to the subject of our present inquiry. Their date is matter of debate. In 1 Tim. iv. 1, Paul speaks of "the latter times" as present or approaching, when foolish and immoral doctrines would be welcomed by many. In 2 Tim. ii. 8, he writes : "Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel ;" and in iv. 1, he anticipates that Christ will "judge the quick and dead (the living and the dead) *at his appearing and his kingdom.*" Vague is all this. The kingdom does not grow in clearness or intensity, but the contrary. But Paul earnestly cautions his friends against profane and vain babblings (2 Tim. ii. 16), which he elsewhere calls "fables and endless genealogies" (1 Tim. i. 4), and "profane and oldwives' fables" (1 Tim. iv. 7);

among the teachers of which he mentions Hymeneus and Philetus as "saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrowing the faith of some" (2 Tim. ii. 18). These men were probably Gnostics who said that their resurrection from ignorance to philosophy was already consummated! The apostle himself (2 Tim. iv. 6—8), a prisoner still, it would seem, expresses himself as "ready to be offered," and as feeling that "the time of his departure is at hand." He has "fought a good fight, has finished his course, has kept the faith." "Henceforth (he says) there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me *at that day*; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love *his appearing*." *That day* and *his appearing* are part of the old Messianic phraseology, but no longer present a distinct idea of *how* and *when*.

In the EPISTLE TO TITUS (ii. 11—15) is this grand and comprehensive declaration, mixed with one dubious phrase (*the glorious appearing*):

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the *glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Are we wrong in thinking that Paul's Jewish Messianic ideas, as expressed in his earliest extant letters to the Thessalonians, were very rapidly modified at the call of events and through the spirit of the gospel mission to

Jews and Gentiles, in the course of these ten years over which his letters extend ?

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS, whether Paul's or not (which is matter of doubt), is an argumentative and often poetical appeal to the Hebrew Christians and other liberally disposed Hebrews, to be satisfied with the spirituality and simplicity of the Christian belief and worship, and to give up their old ceremonies. The sanctuary, the service, the priesthood, the covenant of Christ (he calls it *a kingdom* once, xii. 28)—is already instituted, as he argues the question, in place of that which “is ready to vanish away” (viii. 13). He says: “Ye see the day approaching” (x. 25); and, “Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come and will not tarry” (37). He seems to expect—but vaguely—some clearer manifestation of the kingdom in some impending “shaking of the earth and the heavens.” Perhaps the siege of Jerusalem was now visibly threatening:

See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For, if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven; whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, Yet once more I *shake not the earth only, but also heaven*. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the *removing of those things that are shaken*, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we, *receiving a kingdom* which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. (Heb. xii. 25—28.)

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES anticipates “*the coming of the Lord*,” and urges patience in waiting for it:

Be patient, brethren, unto the *coming of the Lord*. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain. Be ye also patient: stablish your hearts; for *the coming of the Lord draweth nigh*. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold, *the judge standeth before the door*. (James v. 7—9.)

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER (universally received as genuine) anticipates “salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (i. 5); and looks for the appearing of Christ (i. 7): “That the trial of your faith * * * might be found unto praise and honour and glory at *the appearing of Jesus Christ*, whom having not seen, ye love.” Also at ch. v. 4: “And when *the chief Shepherd shall appear*, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” This Epistle also speaks of “*him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead*” (iv. 5). But it counts the past ministry of Christ as included in the *last times*: “Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but *was manifested in these last times* for you, who by him do believe in God” (i. 20).

THE SECOND EPISTLE (which is of doubtful authorship) contains a curious allusion to the then current expectation, and records the feeling of disappointment and suspense in reference to its long delay. Scoffers will come in the last days, saying “*Where is the promise of his coming?* for since the fathers fell asleep, *all things continue as they were* from the beginning of the creation.” (2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.) The reply is, “that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (8); and that “*the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night*” (10). The destruction of the earth by fire is plainly anticipated (verses

7, 10, 12). Let them, therefore, "account that the long-suffering of the Lord is salvation" (15). An allusion is made to what St. Paul has said on the same subject in his Epistles; "in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction" (15, 16).

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN (ii. 18) declares that "*it is the last time,*" as may be known by the fact that many anti-christian teachers are come. And another passage may perhaps, or may not, allude to the expected manifestation of Christ on earth: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, *when he shall appear*, we shall be like him; *for we shall see him as he is*" (iii. 2). So perhaps this: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness *in the day of judgment*; because as he is, so are we in this world" (iv. 17). But these expressions are vague.

The SECOND and THIRD EPISTLES of JOHN furnish no occasion for remark. Nor does the EPISTLE of JUDE.

We have, in this Chapter, brought together the irresistible evidence of the Acts and the Epistles, to the effect that the early disciples, including the apostles themselves, very shortly after the death of Jesus, looked for an outward manifestation of his Messianic kingdom upon earth, under his personal reign; founding their expectation upon his own prophecy that Jerusalem would fall, and the Son of Man would come in his kingdom, before that generation should have passed away.

We ought not to be surprised or shocked at finding that this delusion prevailed. Nothing could be more natural and genuine than this blending of faith in Christ's prophecy

with mistakes in their own apprehension of its scope and meaning,—this mixing together, in fact, of their old Jewish and new Christian beliefs. He who had lately lived with them on earth as a spiritual Messiah was looked for as about to return with more royal manifestations of his reign. And the revealed future life of Christian belief was also mixed up with the expected kingdom of God on earth. We may wish it had not been so; we may feel that the interpretation of Scripture, and of Providence also, has been much perplexed in consequence. But such is the state of the case, and most naturally explainable unless we had reason to believe (which we have not) that their minds were miraculously preserved from mistake on these matters.

The end of the Jewish age and the coming of the Son of Man in his kingdom, are, by the events of history, fixed as having come to pass in the year of Christ 70, when Jerusalem was finally destroyed by Titus. Thus there had been an interval of 37 or 38 years between the death of Jesus and this event, during which the expected coming was looked for without any more precise limitation of time than was afforded by the Saviour's words: "This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled," "There are some standing here who shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." To us, in retrospect, these expressions may seem naturally to imply that only a few of the then living generation would survive to the time predicted. And Christ's expression to Peter in reference to John, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee," seems also to point out the latter as an *exceptional* survivor. Yet the expectation appears to have occupied the minds of the disciples as much at the beginning as at the end of the period.

In the case of St. Paul indeed, who has left fuller records than any one else of his progressive ideas on the subject,

we have found the colouring of those ideas becoming less and less vivid continually, though the coming of the Lord was still devoutly expected by him,—for the end of the age did not arrive during Paul's life-time. But this modification of Paul's individual belief has nothing corresponding to it in the general state of opinion among the Christians of the earliest ages. They were not, generally speaking, thinkers like Paul. In spite of all events and appearances to the contrary, the general belief seems to have fastened itself more and more enthusiastically upon an outward personal return of Christ to the earth. The Apocalypse, or book of Revelation, presents this idea in its fuller growth, eager for realization, under the urgency of stirring events in the religious and political world ; and the expectation, still unfulfilled, takes a new and more distinct form in connection with the visions described in that extraordinary book. That book, then, is our next study.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MILLENNIUM AND NEW JERUSALEM OF THE APOCALYPSE.

IN the acknowledged writings of apostles of Christ we have already found plain proofs that the expected *Coming of his Kingdom* was associated, in their minds and those of the early Christians generally, with a vague yet strong expectation of outward changes which, in point of historical fact, did not occur on the completion of the Jewish age and the overthrow of Jerusalem. We shall be prepared, therefore, to see those ideas yet more fully developed in writings still nearer to that eventful date. And to that date—a little earlier or a little later—to that period of most agitating thought, feeling and expectation on the subject—the Apocalypse or Revelation of John is, by general consent, referred.

This book is therefore one of the most instructive in the whole range of ancient literature, in reference to the next developement of the world's prospective or Messianic ideas. But, in order to find it so, we must read it with the simple purpose of ascertaining what the writer himself *really meant to express*, according to the natural use of language. We must not read it with a prepossession in our minds, either that we can find in times now past a true fulfilment of what he believed to be at hand, or that we are intitled to look forward still for its proper fulfilment in times to come. The diversity of interpretations, and the evident wildness of many of them, which have been successively founded upon

this impression, including those which variously see Anti-christ in Nero, in the Pope, in Mahomet, in Napoleon, and those which have perseveringly predicted the coming end of the world and the Millennium for some period ever at hand and ever again postponed,* and which have found the political events of the interpreter's own day in the visions of the Apocalypse, might well make us doubt whether the true principles of interpretation had been adopted.

The Apocalypse was certainly written about the time of the end of the age or coming of the Son of Man in his kingdom, taking those terms, as defined by Jesus Christ, to mean the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the

* "During the last seven or eight hundred years there has not been an epoch or a crisis in the history of Europe of which the hierophant of the day has not said that it was the opening of the sixth Seal, the commencement of the pre-millennial age, or something of the sort, and in which it has not been discovered that all the events exactly fitted the 'wonderful prophecies' of the Old or New Testament. 'It was the universal belief of the Middle Ages (says Michelet, in his *History of France*) that the thousandth year from the Nativity would be the end of the world ;' a belief which induced universal terror and a disposition to surrender property for the good of the soul. The Abbot Joachim, at the close of the 12th century, predicted that the final consummation would take place in the year 1260, his vaticinations giving rise to the two mendicant orders of the Dominicans and the Franciscans ; the epoch however having passed without witnessing a fulfilment, the 1335 days of Daniel xii. 12 were next taken, and the period 1335 fixed upon as the date of the destruction of Antichrist. In the sixteenth century there arose among the Lutherans a sect headed by Nicholas Storck and Thomas Munzer, announcing a consummation in five, six, or seven years, which led to a bloody war, quenched only in the destruction, at last, of Munzer and his associates. Bengel, it is said, calculated that the Millennium would begin in 1836, while Joseph Woolf assigned 1848 as the true period." (Desprez on the *Apocalypse*, 1870, p. 236, note.)

Domestic prophets have continued the hopeless task in England. Edward Irving in 1826 said he believed the Millennium would come in less than forty years (H. Crabb Robinson's *Diary*, Vol. II. p. 330) ; Dr. Cumming more recently has again and again announced its approach, and again and again been obliged to postpone it.

Jewish polity. It may have been a little before the final doom,—possibly while the siege was known by the writer to be going on ; or possibly (as some think) a little after, when this realized event had begun to be looked upon as the first scene in the fulfilment of the Saviour's prophecy, and the manifestation and spread of his kingly glory were earnestly expected in an outward and militant style which (it is superfluous to repeat) never came to pass. The latest period assigned for the authorship is the time of Domitian, who reigned A. D. 81—96. Without entering here into critical minutiae, the present writer is disposed to think that the book dates itself (in the seventeenth chapter) as written at the beginning of Vespasian's reign (A.D. 69), when the siege of Jerusalem is impending, if not begun. At least the seventeenth chapter—in which seven Roman Emperors seem to be enigmatically enumerated—would appear to belong to that date ; though it is not necessary to conclude that all the other visions contained in the book were written at the same time. More probably, indeed, their production may have been spread over several years in those troublous times, as successive utterances of the Seer's vivid visions. (See Grotius on chap. xvii.)

The author of the Apocalypse is plainly a Christian ; and, as plainly, a Jewish Christian, full of Jewish hopes seeking their accomplishment in a visible Messianic kingdom. In the customary title of the received text, he is described as John the Divine (or the Theologian). From the earliest times of criticism there has been a question whether this was John the apostle of Christ, or another John, an elder of the church at Ephesus. It is to be remarked that he does not call himself an apostle, nor "John the son of Zebedee," nor (as in the Gospel) "the disciple whom Jesus loved ;" but simply *John*. It is admitted on all hands that the author of this book cannot

have been the same who wrote the fourth Gospel. The verbal style, no less than that of thought and feeling, belonging to the respective books, cannot, on any supposition of youthful composition in the one case and aged in the other, be credibly ascribed to the same man. Until lately, English theologians who have entered upon this question, had with common consent ascribed the fourth Gospel to John the apostle, and the Apocalypse to John of Ephesus, in accordance with the judgment of Dr. Lardner and Bishop Marsh, both of whom had cited all the testimonies of the Fathers on the subject. Lately, however, without new testimonies on the matter, opinion seems to have taken the opposite direction; and among our recent writers, the late John James Tayler* and Philip S. Desprez† (the latter professedly following the former in this respect) have ascribed the Apocalypse to John the beloved disciple, and the fourth Gospel to some author unknown. It is not intended here to pursue at large this critical question. But, as the very free principle of interpretation adopted by Desprez is that which the present writer long ago found reason to adopt (the principle of seeking the writer's meaning, whether prophetically true or not), he must confess that he feels it more satisfactory to be able, on critical conviction, to treat the strange visions of the Apocalypse as destitute of *apostolical* authority, especially as their vengeful spirit is in many parts utterly alien to the spirit of Christianity. How should he ascribe them to the apostle of love, the beloved of his Master!

Mr. Desprez truly describes the spirit of the author of the Apocalypse:

"Holding fast to the Jewish theory of a war and triumph of Messiah, he summons the white-robed armies of heaven to con-

* *Attempt to ascertain the Character of the Fourth Gospel.*

† *John, or the Apocalypse of the New Testament.*

tend with the beast and his armies at the battle of that great day of God Almighty, treads the winepress of Divine wrath till blood gushes out of it even unto the horse bridles, and builds the superb kingdom of the Messiah upon the shattered ruins of that of Antichrist. These ideas, it will be observed, are strongly marked with a Jewish tinge, and are conceived in the spirit of that anticipated superiority to other nations which once and again prepared the way for the downfall of the favoured people; their hope of national pre-eminence, which no misfortunes were dark enough to quench, proving but too often the source of national disappointment. Indeed, the Apocalypse of the New Testament is but the echo of that of the Old, re-cast into a Christian shape. As the Jewish prophet conceived of a kingdom of saints which should prevail over the kingdoms of the heathen world, so does the Christian seer behold the kingdom of this world become that of our Lord and of his Christ. As the former saw in visions of the night a Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of days, so the latter depicts the advent of Messiah with power and great glory. As the former imagined the accompanying events of a resurrection and a judgment, so the latter describes the millennial reign and the universal sentence of mankind. As the former drew the appalling picture of the Syrian tyrant, so the latter depicts that of the Roman persecutor. As the former prescribed the duration of the pre-Christian tribulation, so the latter defines that of the Anti-christian period. As the one consigned Antiochus Epiphanes to the burning flame, so the other drags down the beast and the false prophet to perdition,—the characteristic features of the respective representations being impressed by the Jewish mould in which they are cast." (Desprez, pp. 27, 28.)

Again, he says, as a critical interpreter:

"The Apocalypse will continue to be unintelligible so long as the fallacy is suffered to exist, that its visions are capable of an historical fulfilment. Bound by this *à priori* consideration, the interpreter labours to accommodate them to past events, and

failing to do this, either passes by ‘things hard to be understood’ without notice, or else postpones their accomplishment to a doubtful future. But if it were understood that his business is not to reconcile the Apocalypse with irrelevant facts, but to give the meaning which the writer proposed to himself, and which he intended his readers to adopt, the visions themselves might not only yield their secrets more easily, but be capable of a more satisfactory interpretation.” (P. 153.)

And again, most forcibly :

“Our conclusion is strengthened by the fact that, after two thousand years [eighteen hundred, more exactly] spent in the fruitless attempt to square its recusant symbols with events past, present or to come, no result has been obtained which commends itself to the intelligence of reasonable men. Under these circumstances, scepticism is not impiety, but wisdom, and honest doubt preferable to unthinking credulity. * * * * A book which deals in theological invective of a bitter kind, which displays Jewish predilection in an exclusive and unamiable light, which represents Jesus as a tyrannical and sanguinary Messiah, and the Almighty himself as a vindictive and avenging Deity, which abounds in monstrous prodigies and revels in incredible phenomena, which founds the millennial kingdom upon the defeat of the armies of Antichrist, and which connects the coming of Christ at the end of the world with the calamity which came upon Jerusalem and the destruction of Pagan Rome—whatever its claim to apostolical authorship or canonical position—can neither be valuable as a prediction, nor be regarded as a safe guide for the performance of the duties of this life, nor for the attainment of that which is to come.” (Pp. 190, 191.)

It is curious that a writer who judges the spirit of the book in these severe, yet justly descriptive terms, should, without very strong proof, be willing to attribute its authorship to John the reputed apostle of love. He makes, indeed, in another place, this candid acknowledgment of its doubtful authorship :

"In giving expression to our want of sympathy with millennial theories, and with the events by which they are said to be accompanied, it is a consolation to remember that similar misgivings have been entertained in former years, and that the Revelation has not descended to our times as a book 'of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.' Not to speak of the exceptions raised by Dionysius of Alexandria and Eusebius in the third and fourth centuries, possibly with a view* of shielding St. John from the charge of being the author of millennial fables, nor of the fact that the Apocalypse was formally rejected by the Council of Laodicea, A.D. 360, nor yet again of the circumstance that the doctrine of the Millennium was condemned by the Augsburg Confession in the sixteenth century, not merely as a speculative, but as a dangerous practical error, we may adduce the learned testimony of the Reformers to a like distrust." (Pp. 189, 190.)

And then he cites Erasmus and Luther. Elsewhere he remarks, with seeming personal assent:

"The Revelation, it has been said, is the most, and the Gospel (the fourth Gospel) the least Jewish of all the books of the New Testament. The Revelation deals with the literal and the objective, the Gospel with the mystic and the spiritual. The Revelation is narrow and Judaic ; the Gospel Catholic and more comprehensive than even the Epistles of Paul. The characteristic features of the Revelation are action and impetuosity ; in the Gospel, calmness, contemplation and serenity reign supreme. *** In the former, the kingdom of Messiah arrives suddenly amidst the convulsions of the universe and the terrors of the human race ; in the latter, it is established gradually by the secret operation of Divine grace in the soul." (P. 35.)

Yet he who thus contrasts the Apocalypse with the

* A gratuitous imputation. Eusebius says distinctly, *as matter of fact*, that the Revelation had not been universally received, that the Gospel had.

Gospel, concludes the Jewish Apocalypse to be the apostle John's, and the spiritual Gospel nobody's!*

It seems wonderful to the thoughtful reader how there can be any doubt as to the period to which the writer of these visions considered them to refer. So plain does it appear that the events spoken of are believed by him to be immediately impending. Everything is urgent, passionate, vengeful, as words can make it. The end is close at hand. Christ is coming quickly, and is importunately

* A similar rashness of criticism seems to beset him in various specific instances. He asserts that "the character of the book may be said to harmonize with the idiosyncrasy of the sons of Zebedee," pressing the one gospel incident of their proposing to call down fire from heaven in their Master's service—for which Jesus reprobated them, and in reference to which, probably, called them *sons of thunder*; and adopting the stupid apocryphal story of Irenæus about John's hastening out of the public bath where he saw Cerinthus, lest it should fall upon the heretic and himself together. (Pp. 25, 26.) He most gratuitously supposes St. Paul to be referred to in the Apocalypse under the names of *Nicholas* or *Balaam*, *false Jew* and *false apostle* (54), and that John the apostle thus vented his spleen upon the apostle of the Gentiles for the broader Christian views held by him! *Jezebel* (in the message to the church at Thyatira) is, with equal wilfulness, assumed to be Lydia, and Johannian bigotry is supposed to insinuate the grossest imputation against her and Paul! The *synagogue of Satan*, again, are Pauline Jews. Paul is identified with the *false prophet*, though inconsistently the author afterwards makes the latter to be Simon Magus. (Comp. p. 139, note, and p. 148.) Nor is the least important of these needless rash criticisms that which, without apparent hesitation, reluctance or regret—and without attempted proof—makes our Saviour himself to have been a believer in those outside Jewish ideas respecting his own kingdom, which his followers retained (as we read the gospel histories) in spite of his continual attempts to substitute a spiritual idea of the gospel. (See pp. 225, 250, and chap. xii. on the *Gospel of the Kingdom*.) It may be here remarked, that Mr. Desprez has lately changed his views on Apocalyptic interpretation, having in a former volume regarded the book as infallible, and found the interpretation of every vision in contemporaneous or immediate events. Perhaps this utter change in his critical point of view may explain (though hardly excuse) the rash use of newly found freedom.

implored to do so. The plain meaning of words cannot be doubted. To quote St. Peter's Second Epistle, which says, "that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," is only mystifying a subject on which the writer himself has spoken plainly enough to defy such subterfuge. He says what he means quite clearly as to time, at any rate. He believed an astounding change to be immediately impending over the world, such as, in point of historical fact, the then impending end of the Jewish age and opening of the Christian age did not bring. We must judge his meaning by his own words, and not make him say what we think would have been more truly prophetic than what he has said. On this point, of first importance in the interpretation of the book, Mr. Desprez may defy contradiction :

"The Apocalypse closes, as it began, with the assertion expressed in distinct and positive terms, that the great catastrophe, of which it is the principal exponent, is of immediate accomplishment. 'The Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants *things which must shortly be done*. Behold, *I come quickly*; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.' Indeed, so impending is the event, that the prophecy may not be sealed like that of Daniel, '*for the time is at hand*,' the tide of approaching judgments rolling onward with such rapidity that its waves overtake the unjust and the filthy, the righteous and the holy, *just as they are*, without space or opportunity for further change. We hesitate not to say that it would be difficult to express in terms of more definite precision the proximate and sudden character of Messiah's advent, and that, to the mind of a person unbiassed by previous considerations, this conclusion would be *prima facie* inevitable. One note rings through all its seals, trumpets and vials, '*The Lord is at hand*.' One burden is distinguishable through all its highly-wrought and varied symbols, '*Maran-atha*,

—the Lord cometh. One cry is heard amidst the calamities brought upon Jewish and heathen cities, ‘Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him.’ One word, uttered in a voice of thunder, by each of the four living creatures, reverberates through every page, COME, COME, COME, till the last verse of the Apocalypses takes up its dying echoes, ‘AMEN, EVEN SO : COME, LORD JESUS.’ (Pp. 206, 207.)

For our present purpose it will be enough to analyze very briefly the contents of the earlier part of the book which contains these varied visions of coming woe and change ; and then to transcribe *in full*, with occasional amendments of translation, the last few chapters, which describe the writer’s idea of the coming ascendancy of Christ’s kingdom ; the marriage of the Lamb to his bride the Church ; the subjugation of the power of Evil by the binding of Satan for a thousand years ; the first Resurrection and reign of the Saints for the thousand years ; the temporary return of Satan’s power and his final destruction ; the Judgment of the dead in the second Resurrection ; the second death of the wicked ; the New Heaven and New Earth, and the New Jerusalem.

Abstract of chapters i. 1 to xix. 10.

Ch. i. 1—3 is the title of the book, strictly limiting its contents to the time immediately at hand :

A revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him (to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass), and sent and signified by his messenger unto his servant John; who hath testified of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, whatever things he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein ; for the time is at hand.

Ch. i. 4—20. A message is sent to each of the seven churches of the Roman province of Asia; to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea; as intrusted by Jesus Christ in vision to the Seer in the island of Patmos.

Ch. ii. and iii. contain these messages. They are messages of mixed reproof, approval and encouragement to fidelity.

Ch. iv. and v. Heaven is opened to the Seer in vision; and “in the spirit” he sees the divine throne surrounded with twenty-four minor thrones occupied by twenty-four Jewish elders. He sees seven lamps, emblematic of the seven administrative Spirits of God, and four living creatures* resembling those in Ezekiel’s first and tenth chapters. The scene resembles various passages in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. A book sealed with seven seals is in the right hand of Him upon the throne, and a strong angel makes proclamation demanding who is worthy to break the seals. In the name of the Lion of Juda, the Root of David, a Lamb that has been slain does it amid the applause of the whole creation.

Ch. vi.—xi. The seven seals are opened in succession: On the opening of the *first*, a rider on a white horse goes forth conquering and to conquer;—plainly denoting either Christ personally, or Christianity by emblem.

On the opening of the *second*, a rider on a bay horse goes forth,—War,—emblematic certainly, as are the rest.

* These four *living creatures* (*ζῆντα*) must be distinguished from the *wild beasts* (*θηρία*) afterwards mentioned. They ought to have been distinguished in the translation.

At the *third*, a rider on a black horse,—Famine.

At the *fourth*, a rider on a pale horse,—“his name Death, with Hades accompanying him,” commissioned to kill one-fourth of the earth’s population (or, it may be, of that of Judea, or of the Roman Empire).

At the *fifth*, the souls of Christian martyrs are seen under the altar, crying aloud for vengeance, How long, O Lord ?

At the *sixth*, the sun turns black and the moon becomes like blood, the stars fall to the earth, mountains and islands are removed, and men say to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the wrath of the Lamb.

The opening of the *seventh* seal is delayed until the servants of God (12,000 of each tribe of Israel) are sealed on their foreheads. When it is opened (viii. 1), “there was silence in heaven about half an hour.” Then seven trumpets are given to seven angels to sound in succession, after another angel has presented the prayers of all the saints, from a golden censer with much incense, upon the golden altar before the throne.

The trumpets are then sounded in succession :

At the *first*, hail and fire devastate a third part of the trees and all the grass.

At the *second*, one-third of the sea becomes blood, one-third of its living creatures die, and one-third of the ships are destroyed.

At the *third*, a star called Wormwood falls upon one-third of the fresh waters, and makes them bitter and deadly.

At the *fourth*, a third part of the sun, moon and stars, is smitten and darkened ; and an angel with loud voice declares that there are three more woes yet.

At the *fifth* trumpet, a star falls from heaven; the bottomless pit is opened, and locusts swarm out to smite those who have not the seal of God on their foreheads; their king is Abaddon in Hebrew, Apollyon in Greek (Destroyer).

At the *sixth*, four angels which have been hitherto restrained near the Euphrates are set loose; and they bring a huge army of two hundred million horsemen. In a year, a month, a day and an hour, they kill the third part of men.

Still there is no repentance, and another mighty angel comes down (x. 1), declaring that there shall be no longer delay, but that, as soon as the seventh trumpet shall have sounded, the mystery of God shall be finished, as declared to the prophets. The Seer, as directed, eats a little book, or roll, given to him by the angel, and finds it sweet in the mouth, but bitter afterwards. He is told to prophesy again, and to measure the temple and altar. Two witnesses of God,* whose emblems are two olive trees and also two candlesticks, are still to prophesy for three and a half years (the prophetic period in Daniel), and then to be killed in Jerusalem, their bodies to be insulted, but to be brought to life again, and ascend to heaven in the sight of their enemies.

Then the *seventh* angel sounds his trumpet (xi. 15), and “the third remaining woe cometh quickly.” Great voices proclaim that “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.” The twenty-four elders fall on their faces worship-

* These two witnesses have been taken to be Peter and Paul; also Moses and Elijah. So vague is the allegory. It seems most like an allusion to the king and priest in Zech. iv. 11—14.

ing; the temple is opened in heaven, and the ark of the covenant seen in it.

Ch. xii. seems to be an independent vision complete in itself. A celestial woman (who seems to represent Religion, or the Gospel) is travailing in birth, and a great red dragon with seven crowned heads and ten horns is persecuting her. She brings forth a son, who is "to tend all the Gentiles with a crook of iron." The child is carried up to the throne of God. Michael and his angels fight against this dragon three and a half years, and the dragon ("who is that old serpent called the Devil and Satan") is cast to the ground, and his angels with him. Heaven exults; but the dragon still pursues the woman, who has wings given her to escape from him into the wilderness. The dragon pours out a torrent of water from his mouth after her; but the earth soaks it up. He then makes war against the servants of Christ.

Ch. xiii., again, is apparently an unconnected emblematic scene, complete in itself, and again representing the persecuting Roman power. As the Seer stands on the sea-shore, he sees a wild beast (*Ωνύμος*) coming up out of the sea, with seven crowned heads and ten horns, and names of blasphemy upon his heads. He is made up of leopard, bear and lion; and the dragon gives power and authority to this beast. One of his heads receives a deadly wound, but it is healed again. For forty-two months (again the Danielic three and a half years) he has power over all whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. The saints must have patience. Another wild beast comes up from the land, with two horns like a lamb, but talking like a dragon. He

is agent or deputy to the first wild beast, and by wonders and prodigies he deludes many into worshiping the first beast, of whom he makes an image that seems to be alive. He marks the worshipers of the principal beast on the right hand or forehead, authorizing them to buy and sell. And then comes the enigma of the *number of the beast*, which has perplexed interpreters in all ages:

"Here is wisdom: Let him that hath understanding reckon the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred three score and six."*

Ch. xiv. is another vision complete in itself. The Lamb is seen standing on Mount Zion accompanied by the 144,000 redeemed Israelites, "the first-fruits to God and the Lamb." Another angel flies forth to preach the everlasting gospel to all the world with the greatest urgency, "because the hour of God's judgment is come." Then another angel cries that Babylon† is fallen, and denounces wrath against all that worship the beast or his image. Here is still occasion for patience on the part of the saints. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord! Rest and reward shall be theirs! One like the Son of Man goes forth with three angels, to reap the harvest and vintage of the earth and cast the latter into the winepress of the wrath of God.

* The Hebrew letters in *Cæsar Nero*, read as numerals, נָרָוֵן קָסָר, make 666. The Greek letters in *Latinus*, Λατινός, or in *Ulpianus*, Οὐλπίανος (Trajan's name), will do the same. The first interpretation is generally preferred, making Nero stand as the abstraction of persecuting heathenism. See Desprez, p. 152; also the older commentators.

† Babylon, here and in several other passages, plainly denotes either Rome itself, or, more likely, Roman paganism.

Ch. xv. xvi. "Another sign in heaven." Seven angels bring out the last seven plagues to fill up the wrath of God, while those who have been victorious over the beast and his image sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb to the Lord God Almighty. The *first* angel pours forth a plague from his phial, producing ulcers on those who worship the beast's image. The *second* pours his into the sea, turning it into blood, which kills all its living creatures. The *third* turns the rivers and springs into blood. The *fourth* pours it upon the sun, and makes him scorch mankind. The *fifth* phial is poured upon the throne of the beast, and makes his kingdom dark. The *sixth* dries up the Euphrates, that the kings of the East may pass over it. Then three unclean spirits come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet, and summon all the kings of the earth "to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" at Armageddon (Mount Megiddo, or Mount of Assembling). Then the *seventh* phial is poured into the air; and from the heavenly temple a great voice proclaims, It is done! Thunder, lightning and earthquake follow; great Babylon is broken asunder into three parts, and other Gentile cities fall. Islands and mountains vanish. Yet men blaspheme God on account of these plagues.

Ch. xvii.—xix. 10 contains a vision of the fall of the great city, under fresh imagery. John sees, in the wilderness, a woman sitting upon a scarlet-coloured beast with seven heads and ten horns, full of blasphemous names, on whose head is inscribed this mysterious, or emblematical, title: BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINA-

TIONS OF THE EARTH. The angel tells him the mystery or enigma, but in a manner that is somewhat enigmatical still. The seven heads denote seven mountains on which the woman sitteth (no doubt the seven hills of Rome). And they also stand for seven kings (Roman emperors, surely), "of whom five are fallen, one now is, and another is not yet come, and when he cometh he must continue but a short space." An eighth also seems to be spoken of as lately dead or deposed, but about to succeed the other seven till he goes to destruction.* The ten horns (perhaps a definite number used indefinitely) denote, the angel goes on to say, other kings not yet enthroned, who will receive short-lived power from the beast; the Lamb will overcome them, and they will then turn their power against the woman, "the great city."

After these things a powerful angel comes down from heaven, crying: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen," &c. Another voice calls to the people of God to come out of her, lest they partake her sins and plagues. While all the secular world is mourning and lamenting for her, a mighty angel dashes a mill-stone into the sea as an emblem that the

* These eight kings seem to be Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero (omitting Galba, Otho and Vitellius, who collectively reigned only a year, and probably were unknown or unrecognized by the Hebrew seer), Vespasian, Titus, Domitian. Vespasian, by this enumeration, would be the one that is, Titus the next to be, and Domitian the eighth, who also was but is not, having been proclaimed Cæsar at Rome while Vespasian was elected by his troops in the East. But another explanation (favoured by Mr. Desprez) makes the eighth to be Nero, whose return Tacitus tells us was expected in Achaia and Asia, the reports about his death being various and confused. (*Tacit. Hist. ii. 8.*) May not the verse about the eighth king have been a later addition?

"great city Babylon shall be thrown down and shall be found no more at all"*. The saints are avenged, and all heaven praises God with songs of exultation. The twenty-four elders and four living creatures cry, Alleluia. Heavenly voices cry, Alleluia, and proclaim the approaching marriage of the Lamb; for the Bride is ready, arrayed in the righteousness of the saints as her fine linen. (Ch. xix. 10.)

From this place begins the more distinct developement of the great Messianic ideas of the Apocalypse. The binding of Satan for a thousand years;—the first resurrection of the saints and martyrs and their reign during that millennium;—Satan's recovered liberty, renewed deceptions and final destruction;—the general resurrection of the dead;—the second death;—the New Heaven and New Earth and the New Jerusalem;—all these ideas are set forth in gorgeous Jewish imagery, still mixing up the temporal with the spiritual, the passionate and vengeful with the imaginative and devotional.

These remaining visions, as they contain the essence of our present inquiry, will now be given in full, in the words

* The utter destruction of Rome is so plainly declared in the preceding passages, that scarcely the loosest or the most orthodox interpreter can deny it. Grotius, looking for its historical fulfilment, perplexes himself in vain with Alaric, Genseric and Attila, who certainly did not destroy Rome. And Bishop Newton, after running over the same ground, truly says, "Rome hath never yet been depopulated and desolated after this manner," and he concludes that "this prophecy hath not yet been, but remains yet to be fulfilled." Mr. Desprez, in his eighth chapter, headed *Babylon*, forcibly insists that Pagan Rome is meant, and quotes illustrative passages from the Sibylline Oracles, and from the 2nd book of Esdras, written after the Christian era, shewing the prevalence of the expectation that the Messianic kingdom would visibly rise upon the ruin of Rome. The expectation is one thing; its fulfilment is another.

of the English version, except where it leaves the meaning obscure, inaccurate or very inadequate.

Ch. xix. 11. Then I saw heaven opened; and lo! a white horse; and his rider was called Faithful and True; and he doth judge and make war justly. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written which no man knoweth but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood. And his name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he may smite the nations. And he himself shall tend them with a crook of iron. And he himself treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of God Almighty. And he hath, on his vesture and on his thigh, this name written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God, that ye may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of their riders, and the flesh of all men free and bond, both small and great."

And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against him that sate on the horse and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the wonders before him, by which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshiped his image.

The two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the rest were slain by the sword of him that sate upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth ; and all the birds filled themselves with their flesh.

Ch. xx. Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled ; and after that he must be loosed for a short time.

And I saw thrones ; and to those who sate upon them judgment was given ; and I saw the souls of them that had been slain for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast nor his image, nor received his mark upon the forehead or the hand ; and they came to life, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead came not to life until the thousand years were finished. This is the First Resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in this first resurrection ! Over such the second death hath no power ; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Ch. xx. 7. And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and will go forth to deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog,* to gather them together for battle, the number of whom is as the

* Scythian nations so named in Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix., here standing apparently for heathen nations in general.

sand of the sea. And they went up [in the vision] over the breadth of the earth, and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. But a fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet were ; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Ch. xx. 11. Then I saw a great white throne and one sitting on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before the throne. And books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is the book of life ; and the dead were judged by the things written in those books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it ; and Death and Hades delivered up the dead that were in them ; and they were judged every one according to his works. And Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the Second Death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Ch. xxi. Then I saw a New Heaven and a New Earth ; for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away. And the sea is no more !*

And I, John, saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying : Behold, the tabernacle

* The ancient horror of the sea (the *oceanus dissociabilis* of Horace, with its *non tangenda vada*) may well have been intensified to the mind of a lonely exile in the island of Patmos listening to its melancholy moanings.

of God is with men ; and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and Death shall be no more, neither shall sorrow, nor crying nor pain be any longer, for the former things are passed away.

Then He that sate upon the throne said : Behold, I make all things new. And he saith unto me : Write; for these words are true and faithful. Then he said unto me : It is done.* I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit these things ; and I will be his God and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unfaithful, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and poisoners, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone ; which is the Second Death.

Ch. xxi. 9. And there came unto me one of the seven angels who had the seven phials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying : Come hither ; I will shew thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. And its light was like unto a most precious stone, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. It had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are those of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. On the east,

* *yéyore*, It is come to pass ; all is fulfilled. But the prevalent reading is *yéyovar*, 'they are come to pass, or come into existence ; perhaps meaning the new heavens and new earth.

three gates ; on the north, three gates ; on the south, three gates ; and on the west, three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

And he that talked with me had a golden measuring-reed, to measure the city and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lies square, and its length is as large as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height* of it are equal. And he measured its wall, a hundred and forty-four cubits† (high), according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprasus; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

But I saw no temple therein ; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city hath no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it ; for the glory of God enlighteneth it, and the Lamb is its light. And the Gentiles shall walk in its

* Perhaps its height above the plain is meant. But the figure is strangely exaggerative which represents the city as *by measure* 12,000 Roman stadia in length and breadth, that is nearly 1380 English miles. How much more exaggerated for its height or elevation !

† Seventy-two yards, reckoning the smaller cubit.

light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honour into it. And its gates shall not be shut at all by day ; as for night, there will be none there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the Gentiles into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, nor any one that worketh abomination or maketh a lie ; but they only who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Ch. xxii. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Between the street and the river, at intervals, was a tree of life bearing twelve crops of fruit, and yielding its fruit every month ; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the Gentiles. And there shall be no more curse ; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship Him and shall see his face ; and his name shall be upon their foreheads. And there shall be no night any more ; and they shall need no candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God will shine upon them. And they shall reign for ever and ever.

Then said he unto me : These words are faithful and true ; and the Lord God of the holy prophets hath sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. And behold ! I am coming quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.

And I, John, heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship* before the feet of the angel who shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me : See thou do it not ;

* προσκυνήσαι, in the old English sense of *worship*, applicable both to the angel and to the Almighty.

I am fellow-servant with thee and thy brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book: WORSHIP GOD.

Then he saith unto me: Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still;—and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. Behold, I am coming quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work is;—I, the Alpha and the Omega, first and last, the beginning and the end.

Blessed are they that do his commandments! that they may have the privilege of the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs and poisoners and fornicators and murderers and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

I, Jesus, have sent mine angel (messenger) to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning-star. And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come! And let him that heareth this say, Come! And let him that is athirst come. Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

I testify to every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book: If any one add unto these things, God will add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any one take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his portion from the tree of life and the holy city which are written of in this book.

He who testifieth these things saith, I am indeed coming quickly.

Amen ; Come, Lord Jesus !
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
Amen.

Such are, in abstract, the contents of the Apocalypse, with its concluding chapters in full. Is it necessary to summarize the expectations so confidently and urgently put forth in these splendid, but exaggerated and materialistic, pictures of the coming of Christ ? Nothing can be clearer than the expectations expressed ; nothing further from the facts of the world's history since.

Rome was to be quickly and utterly destroyed ; and on its destruction the coming of Christ was to ensue.

The Word of God was to go forth as a warrior with his armies, conquering and to conquer in the name of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and to make of his enemies a banquet for birds of prey.

The beast was then to muster the kings of the earth against the Word ; but he and his false prophet would be thrown into the lake of fire.

Satan was then to be bound and cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years, the millennium of Jewish and Christian imagination ; the souls of the martyrs were to come to life again, in what is called the First Resurrection, and to reign with Christ for the thousand years.

The millennium being ended, Satan was to be set loose again for a while, and would excite the heathen nations to a contest against the kingdom of Christ, and besiege his holy city Jerusalem. But fire from heaven should discomfit them ; and Satan, together with the beast and the false prophet, should be tormented in the fiery lake for ever.

Then the dead in general, small and great (not hitherto recalled to life), should stand before the throne and be judged for their earthly deeds. The wicked should be cast

into the lake of fire, in which Death himself also and Hades should be destroyed. And this would be the Second Death, following upon the Second or General Resurrection and Judgment.

Then the New Heaven and New Earth were to take place of the Old. The tabernacle of God should be with men, and He would dwell with them: there would be no more death nor suffering known.

The New Jerusalem was to descend from heaven, as described in gorgeous poetical imagery, yet imagery that is chiefly exaggerative, and not in any high degree spiritual as a whole.

Certainly nothing resembling this has happened in the world's outward history of eighteen hundred years. Can these pictures then have been intended to describe, by their outward images and actions, the *spiritual* fortunes of the Gospel from its early post-apostolic times? The commentators who have attempted such an interpretation, wholly or in part, if they have not by the attempt disproved their own theory, have shewn that upon that theory language does not express, but disguises, thought; that prophets, instead of foreshewing things to come, raise false expectations. Or can these visions be supposed still destined to be accomplished? Such an idea is most damaging to the supposed prophet who believed they were to come to pass quickly; and the intire character of the anticipated scenes is such as defies the well-observed order of Providence in human affairs.

We may regard this book as shewing the climax of Christian Millenarianism and outward Messianic notions respecting the End of the Age and the Coming of Christ. The history of this belief in post-scriptural times, and its occasional re-assertion from time to time, must be briefly noticed in another Chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

POST-BIBLICAL BELIEFS.

UNDER various modifications, the belief in the speedy Second Coming of Christ, the End of the World, the Millennium, and the New Jerusalem, prevailed strongly among the early Christians till the middle or end of the third century. And connected with these beliefs (among the Jewish Christians especially) was the expectation—not expressed with equal distinctness in the Apocalypse—that the Jewish nation would resume the independent possession of Palestine, with Jerusalem for its glorious capital.

Justin Martyr (who flourished 140—163), Irenæus (who died 202), and Lactantius (who wrote about 306), were strong Millenarians. But Origen, Presbyter of Alexandria (born 184, died 253), one of the ablest, most learned and earnest of the Christian Fathers, speaks of the advocates of these views with great concern. And Jerom (ordained Presbyter of Antioch, 378) hints that they “love earth so much that they desire earthly things in the kingdom of Christ.”* The latter held the doctrine only in a mystical or figurative sense, avowing that the Apocalypse which teaches it “has as many mysteries as words.”† The millenarian idea seems to have been filled up, in common belief, with more definite bodily attributes and outward pleasures than the Apocalypse describes or suggests.

“It must be owned,” says Lardner, “that the orthodox

* Lardner, III. 115.

† Ibid. V. 32.

Chiliasts, or Millenarians, do speak of a thousand years' reign of Christ before the general resurrection ; which good men, having been raised up from the dead, should spend on this earth ; when there shall be an extraordinary plenty of the fruits of the earth ; when also they shall feast upon them ; when Jerusalem shall be rebuilt ; when likewise there will be marriages and bringing forth of children ; but that they believed marriage and fruits of marriage to belong to any of the raised saints, does not appear to me a clear point. Origen and some others speak as if this was the expectation of the Chiliasts, at least of some of them ; which Origen therefore mentions with great concern of mind, being apprehensive that such an opinion, if known by the heathens, might be a reproach upon the Christian religion. And St. Jerom insinuates the same thing of the orthodox Millenarians of his time ; for which reason he reminds them of the saying of our Lord and Saviour, Matt. xxii. 29, 30, *Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For, in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God.* Jerom writes to the same purpose in another place in his Commentaries on Isaiah ; but Irenæus and Lactantius, who were Millenarians, do not express themselves in that manner ; what they say is, that at the time of the first resurrection there will be found some good men living upon the earth, and that of them in the space of a thousand years shall be born a numerous race, a godly seed ; over whom likewise the raised saints are to reign, and by whom they are to be served. Pleasing delusion !” (Lardner, Vol. III. p. 114.)

So, Mr. Gibbon's account (apart from the sneering and most unhistorical suggestion that this doctrine of the Millennium was invented *with a view to promote* the acceptance of Christianity) is correct, as it is vivid :

“ So pleasing was this hope to the minds of believers, that the *New Jerusalem*, the seat of this blissful kingdom, was quickly adorned with all the gayest colours of the imagination. A felicity consisting only of pure and spiritual pleasure would

have appeared too refined for its inhabitants, who were still supposed to possess their human nature and senses. A garden of Eden, with the amusements of the pastoral life, was no longer suited to the advanced state of society which prevailed under the Roman empire. A city was therefore erected of gold and precious stones, and a supernatural plenty of corn and wine was bestowed on the adjacent territory ; in the free enjoyment of whose spontaneous productions the happy and benevolent people was never to be restrained by any jealous laws of exclusive property. The assurance of such a millennium was carefully inculcated by a succession of fathers from Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, who conversed with the immediate disciples of the apostles, down to Lactantius, who was preceptor of the son of Constantine. Though it might not be universally received, it appears to have been the reigning sentiment of the orthodox believers ; and it seems so well adapted to the desires and apprehensions of mankind, that it must have contributed in a very considerable degree to the progress of the Christian faith."*

(*Decline and Fall*, Vol. II. p. 298.)

Nor is Mr. Gibbon's description of the feelings with which many contemplated the approaching destruction of heathen Rome exaggerated ; he justifies it by a savage passage from Tertullian :

" Whilst the happiness and glory of a temporal reign were promised to the disciples of Christ, the most dreadful calamities were denounced against an unbelieving world. The edification of the New Jerusalem was to advance by equal steps with the destruction of the mystic Babylon ; and as long as the emperors who reigned before Constantine persisted in the profession of idolatry, the epithet of Babylon was applied to the city and to the empire of Rome. A regular series was prepared of all the moral and physical evils which can afflict a flourishing nation ;

* Perhaps obstructed it quite as much. But the belief had *grown naturally* (as traced in these pages) ; it had not been *invented for a purpose*.

intestine discord, and the invasion of the fiercest barbarians from the unknown regions of the north; pestilence and famine, comets and eclipses, earthquakes and inundations. All these were only so many preparatory and alarming signs of the great catastrophe of Rome, when the country of the Scipios and Cæsars should be consumed by a flame from heaven, and the city of the seven hills, with her palaces, her temples and her triumphal arches, should be buried in a vast lake of fire and brimstone. It might, however, afford some consolation to Roman vanity, that the period of their empire would be that of the world itself; which, as it had once perished by the element of water, was destined to experience a second and speedy destruction from the element of fire. In the opinion of a general conflagration, the faith of the Christian very happily coincided with the tradition of the East, and the philosophy of the Stoicks and the analogy of nature;* and even the country which, from religious motives, had been chosen for the origin and principal scene of the conflagration, was the best adapted for that purpose by natural and physical causes; by its deep caverns, beds of sulphur and numerous volcanoes, of which those of Ætna, of Vesuvius and of Lipari, exhibit a very imperfect representation. The calmest and most intrepid sceptic could not refuse to acknowledge that the destruction of the present system of the world by fire was in itself extremely probable. The Christian, who founded his belief much less on the fallacious arguments of reason than on the authority of tradition and the interpretation of scripture, expected it with terror† and confidence as a certain and approaching event; and as his mind was perpetually filled with the solemn idea, he considered every disaster that happened to the empire as an infallible symptom of an expiring world." (*Decline and Fall*, Vol. II. p. 300.)

This millenarian idea prevailed as much perhaps in

* Here it is virtually confessed that the opinion had *grown*, rather than been deliberately *invented* by the Christians for a purpose.

† Why with terror, if he was selfishly secure of his millennium?

Egypt as anywhere ; and Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria (from 247—264), held an open disputation or conference with its advocates, which marks an epoch in the history of millenarian views. An Egyptian bishop named Nepos had written a book in their favour, and Dionysius invited his presbyters and others to consider this book. The conference lasted three days, and seems to have been conducted with moderation and good temper on both sides, ending in the candid relinquishment of the millenarian doctrine by Coracio, its chief defender on the occasion. (Lardner, Vol. III. pp. 102, 103.)

Eusebius gives the following very interesting account of two books written by Dionysius in reference to this discussion, entitled, *Concerning the Promises*, vividly realizing to us the state of opinion in which he lived, and the diversity of critical views with which the Apocalypse and its authorship were regarded :

"The occasion of them was Nepos, a bishop in Egypt ; who taught that the promises made to the saints in the divine scriptures were to be fulfilled in a Jewish sense ; affirming that there would be a certain thousand years of bodily pleasures upon this earth. He, thinking that he could support this opinion by *John's Revelation*, wrote a book upon this argument with the title of *A Confutation of the Allegorists*. This book Dionysius answers in his books, *Concerning the Promises*. In the first book he lays down his own opinion. In the second he discourses of *John's Revelation*. And at the beginning of this book he speaketh of Nepos to this purpose : 'But because they produce a book of Nepos, on which they mightily rely, as if he had beyond all contradiction demonstrated that there shall be a kingdom of Christ upon this earth ; on many other accounts truly I respect and love Nepos ; for his faith and industry and study of the scriptures, as well as for the many hymns composed by him, with which not a few of the brethren are still much

delighted. And I reverence him the more because he is dead. But truth is to be preferred and esteemed above all things ; and as we ought without envy to approve, and readily commend what is well said, so have we also a right to examine and censure what appears otherwise. Since, then, the book is public, and by some thought to be plausibly written, and there are some teachers who look upon the law and the prophets to be of no value, and neglect to follow the Gospels, and despise the Epistles of the apostles ; whilst at the same time they extol the doctrine of this book, as containing some great and hidden mystery, and suffer not the weaker of our brethren to conceive anything great and magnificent, either of the glorious and truly divine *appearance of our Saviour* (Tit. ii. 13), or of our resurrection from the dead and *our gathering together* (2 Thess. ii. 1) and *likeness to him* (1 John iii. 2) ; but only to expect in the kingdom of God poor and mortal things, and such as we now enjoy in the present state ; it is necessary that we enter into dispute with our brother Nepos, as if he was present.”

On the book of the Revelation of John and its supposed authorship, Eusebius quotes Dionysius as writing thus :

“ Some who were before us have utterly rejected and confuted this book, criticising every paragraph, shewing it to be throughout unintelligible and inconsistent ; adding, moreover, that the inscription is false, forasmuch as it is not John’s ; nor is that a revelation which is hidden under so obscure and thick a veil of ignorance ; and that not only no apostle, but not so much as any holy and ecclesiastical man, was the author of this writing ; but that Cerinthus, founder of the heresy called after him Cerinthian, the better to recommend his own forgery, prefixed to it an honourable name. For this (they say) was one of his particular notions, that the kingdom of Christ should be earthly ; consisting of those things which he himself, a carnal and sensual man, most admired ; that is, eating and drinking and marriage ; and, for the more decent procurement of these, feastings and sacrifices and slaughter of victims. But, for my part, I dare not reject the

book, since many of the brethren have it in high esteem ; but allowing it to be above my understanding, I suppose it to contain throughout some latent and wonderful meaning ; for though I do not understand it, I suspect there must be some profound sense in the words ; not measuring and judging things by my own reason, but ascribing more to faith, I esteem them too sublime to be comprehended by me. Nor do I condemn what I have been unable to understand ; but I admire [or wonder ?] the more, because they are above my reach."

Dionysius strongly maintains that the Apocalypse is not the work of the apostle John :

"I do not deny, then, that his name is John, and that this is John's book ; for I acknowledge it to be the work of some holy and divinely inspired person. Nevertheless I cannot easily grant him to be the apostle, the son of Zebedee, brother of James, whose is the Gospel inscribed *according to John*, and the Catholic Epistle ; for I conclude, from the manner of each, and the turn of expression, and from the conduct [or disposition] of the book, as we call it, that he is not the same person." (Lardner, Vol. III. pp. 103—105.)

He then brings forward five objections to its apostolic authorship, which Lardner condenses and sums up as follows :

"First, that the evangelist John has not named himself, neither in his Gospel nor in his Catholic Epistle, but the writer of the Revelation nameth himself more than once. Secondly, that though the writer of the Revelation calls himself John, he has not shewn us that he is the apostle of that name. Thirdly, that the Revelation does not mention the Catholic Epistle, nor that Epistle the Revelation. Fourthly, that there is a great agreement in sentiment, expression and manner, between St. John's Gospel and Epistle ; but the Revelation is quite different in all these respects, without any resemblance or similitude. Fifthly, that the Greek of the Gospel and Epistle is pure and correct, but

that of the Revelation has barbarisms and solecisms." (Lardner, Vol. III. p. 130.)

These long extracts have been made, in order to present the most authentic picture of the state of millenarian opinion up to the end of the third century, when it was so distinctly confronted by Dionysius. After the discussion in Egypt, the popularity of the doctrine greatly declined, and little more was heard of it till the tenth century. The book of the Apocalypse, it must also be observed, fell lower in general estimation; just as its credit had risen and its apostolical authorship been too readily accepted while the millenarian doctrine was in vogue. As the course of the world still went on, year after year and age after age, without miraculous change or dissolution, the literal interpretation of the Apocalypse gave place to more vaguely spiritual ones. The millennium came to be regarded pretty much in the spirit in which Jerom had viewed it, as equivalent to the prevalence of Christianity, the subjection of evil, and the progress of virtue in the world.

But when the tenth century of Christianity was almost completed, it was remembered that Satan was to be bound for a thousand years, and then to be loosed for a season prior to the general Resurrection and last Judgment:

"About the year 960, as the season approached nearer (writes Dean Waddington), one Bernhard, a hermit of Thuringia, a person not destitute of knowledge, boldly promulgated (on the faith of a particular revelation from God) the certain assurance, that at the end of the thousandth year, the fetters of Satan were to be broken; and, after the reign of Antichrist should be terminated, that the world would be consumed by sudden conflagration. There was something plausible in the doctrine, and it was peculiarly suited to the gloomy superstition of the age. The clergy adopted it without delay; the pulpits loudly resounded with it; it was diffused in every direction with astonishing

rapidity, and embraced with an ardour proportioned to the obscurity of the subject and the greediness of human credulity. The belief prevailed and possessed every rank of society, not as a cold and indifferent assent, but as a motive for the most important undertakings. Many are mentioned—not of the vulgar only, but nobles, princes, and even bishops—to have abandoned their friends and their families, and hastened to the shores of Palestine, in the pious persuasion that Mount Sion would be the throne of Christ, when he should descend to judge the world; and these, in order to secure a more partial sentence from the God of mercy and charity, usually made over their property, before they departed, to some adjacent church or monastery. Others, whose pecuniary means were thought, perhaps, insufficient to bribe the justice of Heaven, devoted their personal service to the same establishments, and resigned their very liberty to those holy mediators, whose pleadings, they doubted not, would find favour at the eternal judgment-seat. Others permitted their lands to lie waste and their houses to decay; or, terrified by some unusual phenomenon in the heavens, betook themselves in hasty flight to the shelter of rocks and caverns, as if the temples of nature were destined to preservation amidst the wreck of man and his works.

"The year of terror arrived, and passed away without any extraordinary convulsion; and at present it is chiefly remarkable as having terminated the most shameful century in the annals of Christianity. The people returned to their homes, and repaired their buildings, and resumed their former occupations; and the only lasting effect of this stupendous panic was the augmentation of the temporal prosperity of the Church." (Waddington's *History of the Church before the Reformation*, II. 40, 41.)*

Another absurd attempt to apply the predictions of the

* See also Mosheim's *Eccl. Hist.* Cent. x. Part ii. ch. iii., who states that almost all the donations made to the Church during the tenth century proceeded from this avowed motive: *Appropinquante mundi termino* (The end of the world being at hand), was the usual phrase.

Apocalypse is detailed by Mosheim as having been made about the beginning of the thirteenth century : "There were handed about in Italy several pretended prophecies of the famous Joachim, abbot of Sora [or Flora] in Calabria, whom the multitude revered as a person divinely inspired, and equal to the most illustrious prophets of ancient times. The greatest part of these predictions were contained in a certain book entitled *The Everlasting Gospel*, and which was commonly called *The Book of Joachim*." The author seems to have anticipated the destruction of the Church of Rome, whose corruptions he severely censured, and the promulgation of a more perfect gospel. He divided the history of the world into three ages : that of the Old Testament was that of *The Father*; the time of the New Testament was that of *The Son*; and the third age, that of *The Holy Spirit*, was now at hand. The austere or *spiritual* branch of the Franciscans adopted these views, and one Gerhard, in 1250, published an *Introduction* to Joachim's *Everlasting Gospel*, in which it was maintained : "That St. Francis, who was the angel mentioned in the *Revelations* xiv. 6, had promulgated to the world the true and everlasting gospel of God; that the gospel of Christ was to be abrogated in the year 1260, and to give place to this new and everlasting gospel, which was to be substituted in its room; and that the ministers of this great reformation were to be humble and bare-footed friars, destitute of all worldly emoluments." A long and fierce dissension ensued in the Franciscan order; but no such outward kingdom of heaven seems to have been anticipated as had been looked for by earlier enthusiasts.*

The next conspicuous outbreak of Millenarian fanaticism was at the period of the Reformation. It was a widespread idea among uneducated but devout minds, that the

* Mosheim, Cent. xiii. Part ii. ch. ii. sec. xxxiv.

visible church of Christ (if they did not call it his visible kingdom) was to be an assembly of true saints, apart from the reprobate world in general; and also that it should be exempt from the control of secular governments. The wrongs and oppressions under which the poorer classes in many countries laboured, at the hands of the nobles, the clergy and clerical institutions, gave the keenness of contrast to the idea of what ought to be under the sway of Christ's kingdom. It was not surprising that when Luther proclaimed freedom from the yoke of the Church of Rome, the enthusiasm for civil liberty and civil reformation should have allied itself to the new Protestantism. Accordingly, a revolt against monarchical institutions began to mix with the revolt against Popery; which, if it was not exactly to be called Republicanism, acknowledged no king but Jesus Christ.

In Luther's own time, an insurrection of the peasants in Saxony and the neighbouring provinces took this character, giving Luther infinite concern, till, after vainly striving to turn the minds of the princes to clemency, and to control the wild fanaticism of the insurgents, he could no longer deny that the revolt must be suppressed by force. Most of these misguided people belonged to the sect of Adult Baptists, or, as they were generally called, *Anabaptists* (Re-baptizers), because they maintained the necessity of re-baptism in adult years for those who had been baptized in infancy. The leader of this insurrection was Thomas Munzer, who seems to have been not only a pious and earnest, but also an educated man, having, like Luther, studied at Wittemberg, and having become a preacher at Zwickau at twenty-two years of age. He was a devoted admirer of Joachim, the Calabrian abbot of the thirteenth century, and held the most highly enthusiastic ideas of direct personal inspiration as conferred upon himself and

his followers. His insurrection was soon put down, but not without much bloodshed, by the troops of the Elector of Saxony and the neighbouring princes ; and Munzer himself was put to death as a criminal.

But bloodshed has never extinguished an enthusiastic belief, whether reasonable or fanatical; and the Anabaptists continued to make themselves politically troublesome in Germany, Switzerland and Holland, proclaiming that the kingdom of Christ on earth needed no civil magistrates, and that God revealed his will to chosen persons by dreams and visions. In 1533, a number of Dutch Anabaptists made themselves masters of Munster, the capital of Westphalia, and called it the *New Jerusalem*. One John Bockhold was proclaimed king ; and the city was besieged and retaken by its sovereign bishop, Count Waldeck, in 1536. The name of Anabaptist became for a long time another term for political fanaticism. (See Mosheim, Cent. xvi. Sec. iii. Part ii. Sec. vii.)

The same delusion appeared in England during the Commonwealth. In the Parliamentarian army there were not a few *Fifth-monarchy men*, so called from their belief that the reign of Christ on earth had succeeded to the four great kingdoms described in the book of Daniel; after which, that prophet says : "The God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed." (Daniel ii. 44.) When, in 1657, the idea was seriously entertained of making Cromwell king, a plot for his assassination was laid by some of these men, who would have no king but Jesus, and no Parliament but a Sanhedrim of saints. The conspirators were sent to the Tower, but not executed. It appeared that they had correspondents in many parts of the country. Less than a year after the Restoration, an insurrection of about fifty or sixty of the same sect broke out in London under the leader of the previous plot, one

Venner, a wine-cooper, which was put down by the military and further revenged by the gallows. And again, about the end of 1662, another plot, real or supposed, against the King, the Duke of York and General Monk, sent six more of these fanatics to execution. (See Rapin's *History of England*.)

The religious views of Baron Emanuel Swedenborg next demand notice in the history of Apocalyptic beliefs. This remarkable man was the son of a Swedish Lutheran bishop. He was born at Stockholm in January, 1688, studied under his father and afterwards at the Upsal university, exhibiting great talent and making distinguished attainments in both literature and science, being also from early childhood intensely engrossed by religious reflection. He travelled much, and spent no little time in England, where he died at eighty-four years of age. In 1716, he was appointed Assessor to the Swedish Royal Board of Mines; a tribute to his skill in science, especially that of mechanics. In 1719, he was ennobled by Queen Ulrica, and his name changed from Swedborg to Swedenborg; from which time he sat with the equestrian nobles in the triennial assemblies of the States of Sweden. Higher dignity was afterwards offered him, which he says, "I declined to accept lest it should prove a snare to me." In 1743, he believed himself to be admitted to special converse with the spiritual or heavenly world, and commissioned to reveal its mysteries; and in 1747 he withdrew from his office in the Board of Mines, of which, however, the salary was continued to him for life. "The reason of my withdrawing from the business of that employment (he says) was, that I might be more at liberty to apply myself to that new function to which the Lord had called me." And his own account of that call is as follows: "Whatever of worldly honour and advantage may appear to be in the things before mentioned, I hold

them as matters of low estimation when compared to the honour of that sacred office to which the Lord himself hath called me, who was graciously pleased to manifest himself to me, his unworthy servant, *in a personal appearance* in the year 1743; to *open in me* a sight of the spiritual world, and to enable me to *converse with spirits and angels*; and this privilege has been continued to me to this day. From that time I began to print and publish various unknown *Arcana*, that have been either seen by me or revealed to me, concerning HEAVEN and HELL; the state of men after death; the true worship of God; the spiritual sense of the Scriptures; and many other important truths tending to salvation and true wisdom; and that mankind might receive benefit from these communications was the only motive which has induced me at different times to leave my home to visit other countries. As to this world's wealth, I have sufficient, and more I neither seek nor wish for." (Letter dated London, 1769.) He also says: "I am a Fellow, by invitation, of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Stockholm, but have never desired to be of any other community, as I belong to the society of angels, in which things spiritual and heavenly are the only subjects of discourse and entertainment; whereas in our literary societies the attention is wholly taken up with things relating to the body and this world."

Such avowals sound like the dreams of self-deluding mysticism; but Swedenborg seems to have been by no means eccentric on any other subject than his religious visions.

The foundation-principle of the theology which he believed to have been thus revealed to him was: That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (with some exceptions) are plenarily inspired, and contain, besides their apparent natural meaning, an *inward or spiritual*

sense also, which is to be ascertained by what he calls the Science of *Correspondences*, as existing between things natural and things spiritual. His descriptions of the spiritual world are outward, bodily and *sensal* (if the word may be used), but not gross.* His doctrinal views very much modify and soften the received theology as to predestination, free-will, faith and works. His Trinity is remarkable, being supposed to be comprised in the person of Jesus Christ. But our concern now is with his spiritual interpretation of the Judgment and the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse.

The Judgment actually took place, he believed (not outwardly) in the year 1757, as witnessed by him in the spiritual world; and after that, the New Church, or New Jerusalem, descended from the New Heaven. This new spiritual dispensation, he maintained, began from the 19th June, 1770. To all but the followers of Swedenborg, this seems manifest self-delusion on his part; but he has many followers, both in the separate organization calling itself the New Jerusalem Church, and also (it is understood) within the pale of the Church of England. His views altogether confront the long-entertained notion of an outward kingdom of Christ and his personal reign in the world; but they again narrow the idea of his spiritual kingdom over men's hearts and lives, by an arbitrary date,

* In the treatise on *Heaven and Hell*, he writes: "As often as I conversed with angels face to face, it was in their habitations, which are like to our houses upon earth, but far more beautiful and magnificent, having rooms, chambers and apartments in great variety, as also spacious courts belonging to them, together with the gardens, parterres of flowers, fields, &c., where the angels are formed into societies. They dwell in contiguous habitations, disposed after the manner of our cities, in streets, walks and squares. I have had the privilege to walk through them, to examine all around about me, and to enter their houses, and this when I was fully awake, having my inward eyes opened."

and by its limitation to that small section of the Christian church who have a strange confidence in the prophetic claims of Emanuel Swedenborg.

Still more recent revivals of these old beliefs in the visible change or end of the world, and in the visible establishment of a supernatural kingdom of God, may be briefly mentioned.

It is remarkable that so rationalizing an interpreter of Scripture as Dr. Priestley should have found fault with the views of Swedenborg on the ground of his representing the second coming of Christ as having already taken place, and have insisted that it is still to happen in literal, visible form, at some still future period. The same able and versatile critic, in his Notes on the Jewish prophecies, continually expresses his expectation of the restoration of the Jews to their own land, and considers many of the predictions of Hebrew Messianic blessedness as still in store for that still future time. Priestley, with all his boldness of interpretation, did not doubt the absolute truth of such prophecies ; nor did he explain away figuratively their earthly imagery, as Swedenborg and so many others have done in spiritualizing the Apocalypse.

It is also to be remarked that the old belief lingers in the formularies of the Church of England, especially in this prayer occurring in the Burial Service : "That it may please thee, of thy gracious goodness, *shortly to accomplish the number of thine elect, and to hasten thy kingdom* ; that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal and everlasting glory." This phraseology recalls that of the Revelation in ch. vi. 9—11, xi. 18, xiv. 13 ; in all which the martyred or virtuous dead are waiting for the great consummation. Not that the Apocalyptic belief is consciously accepted by

the English Church in general. Not that the clergy, who continually read these words in the funeral service, can be supposed to have any active conviction of the kind. The phraseology survives the idea. Probably the words are both read and heard with a passive assent merely to their *feeling and devotion*, without any active thought as to their *meaning*. But who can, on consideration, doubt that they are based upon the old Apocalyptic expectation of the coming accomplishment of a sacred period for which the dead saints are waiting patiently? They pray for its speedy completion; they pray that the Almighty will thus "hasten his kingdom," so that *we* (the living, surely) may with the departed have our perfect consummation and bliss, &c. And this bliss is to be in *body* as well as soul. Surely the doctrine of the Apocalypse is reflected in shadowy outline here.

In 1823, the religious and theological world was startled by the preaching of Edward Irving in London; among whose grand topics of denunciation and promise were the visible Judgment of the world and the Millennial kingdom. The time limited by the seer is however past;* yet the representatives of the same views are to be found gathered together in one or more churches in London. Dr. Cumming, who has taken up the same idea, has several times extended the date of his predictions, persisting again and again that the latter days are close at hand. And he does not mean thousands of years off, any more than the seer of the Apocalypse did,—if we would understand the latter aright.

The more popular movements of the Latter-day Saints in this country and the Mormons in the United States (to whom multitudes of the former emigrate) are mixed up with the same Millennial views, though also partaking of

* See p. 315, note.

the English emigrant's natural desire to better his condition in the world. The Mormon settlement having grown to the dimensions of a State in the North American Union, may (if for no other reason) claim a little further notice and explanation. Its history is indeed curious among popular enthusiasms.

One Joseph Smith professed to have received in 1827, from the hands of an angel, a wonderful book written on golden plates in hieroglyphic characters (which no one else however saw, except in translation on paper or parchment). He had also visions shewing that this book of Mormon was designed to supersede the revelations of the Old Testament and the New, professing, as it did, to be the Bible of a primeval race in North America. The fact seems to have been, that the book had been written by a man named Spaulding (but not published) as an experimental romance founded upon the curious speculation, which is favoured by some theologians and ethnologists, to the effect that the North American Indians were descended from the tribes of Israel who were lost in and since the Assyrian captivity. Among the published beliefs of this Mormon sect are these :

"We believe all that God has revealed ; all that He does now reveal ; and we believe that He will yet reveal many more great and important things pertaining to the kingdom of God and Messiah's second coming.

"We believe in the literal gathering of Israel, and in the restoration of the ten tribes ; that Zion will be established upon the western continent ; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth a thousand years ; and that the earth will be renewed, and receive its paradisaical glory.

"We believe in the literal resurrection of the body, and that the dead in Christ will rise first, and that the rest of the dead live not again until the thousand years are expired."

How like the belief of the Apocalypse is most of this ! But is the city of the Salt Lake the New Jerusalem ? Or is society there the pattern of the heavenly life ? Nothing could so discredit John of the Apocalypse as to think Mormonism was his institution.

It is a more grave and interesting inquiry to ask, What do the modern Jews of education and culture think on these questions, the basis of which is supplied by their ancient history and scriptures ? The following is one of the most recent expressions of their belief from high authority : it occurs towards the conclusion of "A Course of Sermons on the Biblical Passages adduced by Christian Theologians in support of the Dogmas of their Faith, preached in the Bayswater Synagogue, by Hermann Adler, Ph.D., Minister of the Congregation" (1869). After expounding the *Messianic* prophecies generally as having reference to Jewish times long since past, the preacher still maintains (Serm. ix.) that "all those various prophecies which shine like orient pearls in the inspired pages of Holy Writ, speak of a Redeemer who *will* come, but who has not yet appeared upon earth." The passages which he adduces as most cogent are Is. xi. 1—9 ; Numbers xxiv. 17—19 ; Deut. xxx. 1—5 ; Ezek. xxxvii. 21—28 ; Micah iv. 1—4, v. 1 ; and he also rests upon the general tone of the Jewish Scriptures, which tell us "that the golden age is not to be looked for in the past, as the pagan poets taught, but in the future." (P. 128.) He declares Judaism immutable and eternal. And he speaks confidently, though not very clearly, as to the approach of the expected Messianic kingdom and its King :

"Be assured, it is to this glorious consummation that all the events in the history of the world are tending ; though we may not always readily perceive that such is their end. Wherein else did the mission of both Christianity and Mahomedanism consist

(notwithstanding their admixture of error) than to teach the worship of One God to a heathen world, and to promulgate the pure and lofty doctrines of the Bible? Two of the greatest and most philosophical minds of our nation, R. Judah Hallevi and Maimonides, have declared this truth. The remarks of the latter are especially worthy of note. He says that ‘the historical mission of these two religions consists in paving the way for the coming of the King Messiah, when all will worship the Lord with one accord. For, by means of these two religions, the predictions relative to the Messiah, and the Law and its precepts, have been diffused throughout the world, and have penetrated to distant isles.’

“But upon us, the children of Israel, devolves the supreme duty, and to us belongs the great privilege, to hasten the approach of the Messianic days, by cleaving heart and soul to the dictates of our religion; by shewing forth to the whole world its grandeur, its truth, its ennobling influence! It is related in the Talmud, that a sage once asked, ‘When, when will the Messiah come?’ ‘This day,’ was the reply he received. ‘This day?’ he asked in surprise. ‘There is nought to indicate his coming.’ ‘Yes, this day, if ye will hearken to God’s voice.’ *Our redemption will come on the day, at the hour, when we shall have rendered ourselves worthy of it by our obedience.* The time when the Divine promise will be fulfilled, depends upon our sincere penitence and good works; upon our steadfast adherence to, and faithful observance of, the precepts of the Lord.

“Grant, O Lord, that we may speedily become worthy of thy salvation! Grant, oh grant, that the spring-time of the world may soon approach! Then will the winter have passed away—the winter of false belief; the rain will be over and gone—the chilling blasts of intolerance and persecution. The flowers will appear on the earth—the flowers of universal peace, love and justice. The time of song will have arrived, the song of regenerated mankind, when the kingdom of Heaven shall be revealed. The voice of the turtle-dove will be heard in the land—the voice of the King Messiah, ‘the voice of him who bringeth good

tidings, who publisheth peace, who publisheth salvation, who saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.' Amen."

Rabbi Adler also confidently anticipates the restoration of Israel to the Holy Land. (See Sermon ix.)

But, on the other hand, a synod of Rabbis lately held in Germany (we are told) recognized the principle of individual authority in matters of religious belief, and the importance of unfettered scientific investigation; and *renounced the expectation of the restoration of Israel.* (*Jewish Record*, quoted in *Athenaeum*, July 31, 1869.)

Thus the Jews vary, as is natural enough, in their beliefs and expectations. The wise Rabbi who said Messiah comes to each of us whenever we are prepared for him, seems to repeat the idea of Jesus: "The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation, but it is within you." And the essence of that venerable belief which looked for the golden age in the future instead of the past, was a belief in man's improbability under God's providence.

CHAPTER X.

HUMAN PERFECTIBILITY.

As already hinted in these pages, the interest attaching to the religious beliefs here reviewed is quite separable from their mere form, and independent of their concrete truth or fallacy. In so far as they have expressed the perpetual aspiration of the human mind and heart after something better, higher, purer, than human life has yet exhibited, the Messianic and Millennial ideas of Jews and Christians may be ranked as virtual speculations on *Human Perfectibility*, or (as the idea might perhaps be better expressed) *Human Improvability*, and as aspirations towards it.

This improvability may be looked at either as the attribute of the individual, or collectively as that of society, of nations, of mankind. And in each aspect we may inquire into the faculty as *potential*, or into its attainments as *actual*. We may ask respecting the individual man, what power of improvement he has, and also what progress he has made; we may inquire, that is, into his *improvability*, and into his *improvement*. And so, of the race of man—made up of so many communities, each including so many individuals—we may inquire into its power of improvement, and we may also ask what history tells of its realization. Indeed, the two questions soon blend practically into one. The consciousness of the faculty leads us to ask what results have been thus far realized; and, again,

the history of the past must necessarily be, to a great degree, the guide to our expectations for the future. This then is the real inquiry upon which we are at last thrown. What belief may we fairly hold, according to our perception of the laws of Providence in human life and the record of past human history, as to the future condition of man in this world? Is it a state of continual progress, in the main, as regards all the great constituents of true happiness and virtue? Or is its temporary improvement again and again to be undone by relapses into barbarism and wretchedness? And is human progress confined chiefly to the material life? or is it also that of mind and morals, virtue and religion? These are the great inquiries that beset the believer in Providence.

And surely we may point to the records even of enthusiastic hope and sad disappointment as proof of the inherent capacity of man for progress. Let the stern historian shew (as he may) that every particular form in which the ideal Jewish or Christian future has been imagined, has failed of being literally realized; yet he cannot but admit the fact of the constant aspiration, and with it also the capacity; and we can often shew him that they have realized a different and even a better good than the particular form which had been hoped, attempted and frustrated.

Let him, for instance, prove (what it needs little learning to shew) that, under that *Branch* of the royal house of David who was evidently contemplated by Isaiah, neither the wolf literally lost his ferocity, nor the lion and serpent their terrors, nor was the spiritual condition implied in the bold figure fulfilled, except very imperfectly; that neither the *earth*, nor even the little *land of Judea*, was satisfactorily "filled with the knowledge of Jehovah;"—we still say, the faculty and the aspiration lived and strove, and that was better than an external gift. Let him prove that

the more decided and permanent form which that Jewish hope next assumed, in looking for a divine kingdom on earth on the restoration of the people from Babylon, was again, as regards outward details, an unfounded hope. We all know it. Yet that hope was not in vain to those who held it. The discipline was not in vain which it gave to their virtue, their patriotism and their religious faith. Not in vain was the impulse given to their minds and characters which found them, for centuries more, looking forward and preparing for their Messiah's coming. And let the historian still further prove to us, that the Christian Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, when he really came, again disappointed this national Jewish hope. We know it; and we see in the disappointment something greater, more exalted and spiritual, than its outward fulfilment would have been. To find Gentiles and Jews united in accepting that spiritual Messiah, was surely a great step in virtuous idealism, lifting after it the actual of every one's life. And let our historian (if he will) remind us also how this same idea of a better age, not satisfied even with the Christian doctrine of faith, duty and immortality, or being still unable to part with its fondest prejudices, next took the form of expecting that the risen Christ would return to earth in person and set up a visible, yet spiritual, kingdom; how the unknown writer of the book of *Revelation* gave definiteness to this idea at the time when the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans was in progress or just completed, boldly declaring that idolatrous Rome too, the persecutor of Jews and Christians, should fall, and then the New Jerusalem should at length descend from heaven, and Christ reign in it a thousand years; how, among the Christians of the second and third centuries, the belief in this Millennium became prevalent (though some of their learned men disputed and denied it); and how the New Age

has always failed to begin, as often as its visible beginning has been expected ;—we say still, it is a history of virtuous and religious hope, energy and endurance, the essence and the glory of which is to have been thus unextinguishable and prospective, while its mere accident has been to have taken a form, or forms, which under the great laws of the world's Providential government (now better understood) were doomed to be disappointed.

Let the student of history point also to the various methods unconnected with the religious faiths of the Bible—the legislative or merely social methods—by which it has been attempted at various times to raise the physical and secular condition of the community. Let him shew (as it is easy to do) that Lycurgus failed in his attempt to establish happiness and virtue by a community of goods in Sparta; let him smile at the ideal Republics of Plato and Sir Thomas More; let him point, whether in sorrow or in scorn, to the futile schemes of English and American socialism under Robert Owen, and of the French systems of Saint Simon and Fourrier;—and we must still say, the repeated effort after so often repeated failure bespeaks that unquenchable longing for improvement, and belief in it, which are the virtual pledge of human progress. Pity that so much good energy should be misdirected and fail! Yet all this affords, to the thoughtful and benevolent mind, not food for contempt, or sarcasm, or despondency; but rather evidence of forces striving earnestly for improvement, of aspirations aiming at something better than is at present experienced, however vague the aim proposed, however inadequate the means by which it has been attempted. Human nature *feels itself capable of progress*, at any rate. And the Jewish and Christian beliefs have given strength and earnestness to these natural feelings and hopes. Pure religion dictates and encourages them. The Christian faith

and the Christian morality, to whatever extent they prevail, promote their realization. The Christian ideal is, Perfectibility for Man; if ultimately in the life to come, yet certainly by means of progress in the present life. We therefore enter upon the inquiry into facts and tendencies, with a feeling of hopefulness, with a disposition to believe in progress.

History, on its wide scale, is the constant record of physical and social progress. The course of every nation that *has* a history, has been from barbarism through various stages of civilization. The old theory is obsolete—for want of facts and analogies to support it—that mankind have degenerated from a higher original condition. Savage tribes may remain long unimproved; but let more civilized nations come into contact with them, and they soon learn such arts at least as seem useful to them,—together, it may be, with some indulgences that are detrimental rather than advantageous. Some of the ancient civilizations seem, indeed, to have advanced to a high degree of perfection in art, and then to have become stationary; yet Egypt and India (types of unchangeableness for centuries) now accept the modern arts of England gladly. History tells the mournful story of civilized nations falling before barbarous invaders; but even then, civilization itself has become triumphant, and progress has gone on more widely; for the conquered have taught their conquerors. So Greece fell before the arms of Rome, and then taught her conquerors finer arts than that of war, imbuing them with letters and philosophy. And Rome, in her turn, fell before the Northern and Eastern hordes; but not till she had become able to teach them a higher religion, in addition to the arts of secular life. These are ineffaceable outlines of the world's history at large.

The useful and ornamental arts of life, which furnish

food, clothing and dwelling in every degree of advance from the necessities, through the comforts, up to the refinements, elegances and luxuries of human existence, commend themselves so directly to man's outward senses, as to ensure their cultivation everywhere in proportion to opportunity. It is probable that no useful invention has ever been lost, unless superseded by a better. If it is the fact that one or two rich colours in the stained glass of mediæval art are lost to us, they have not left a very urgent want, and modern chemistry cannot have failed to discover most things that alchemy had before laid hold of through chance or empiricism. The progress of modern art and science—united for mutual advantage—is truly wonderful to look back upon. The Printing-press, the Steam-engine, the Railway, the Electric Telegraph,—what a history of human acquisitions to knowledge, power, comfort, happiness, do these words denote! How solid too is the progress when art is based upon exact science! The ancient philosophies were mere theories *a priori*; but modern science is experimental and inductive. So long, therefore, as the laws of Nature shall be unchanged, the arts founded upon the knowledge of those laws are safe. There is perhaps nothing in which the moderns have not surpassed the civilized Greeks and Romans, unless it be in the imitative arts of Sculpture and (as some venture to think, in the necessary absence of all remains) of Painting. But, as perfection of art here consists in perfect imitation, with the best materials for working upon, the only possible progress left for us would seem to be as regards the choice of subjects representative of the higher civilization of modern times.

One great mark of progress in modern civilization is, the *wider extension* of its blessings. The improvement of the useful arts has caused such a cheapening of their products, that an industrious modern artizan is better fed, clothed

and housed, than the higher orders formerly were. Knowledge, refining and elevating the mind, is not only more advanced, but immensely more diffused. The mental cultivation which marked only select classes in former times, is the common inheritance of all who desire it in civilized states; and its yet wider diffusion is everywhere demanded and promoted. The progress may seem slow to eager expectants; but, from the revival of letters and the invention of the printing-press, it has been sure and uninterrupted.

Naturally and necessarily, the growth and diffusion of knowledge has led to the improvement of Law and the extension of political Rights. Domestic Slavery has been long unknown except among savages. The African Slave-trade fell, and Negro Slavery followed it, in England and her colonies first, in the United States more recently. Russian serfdom is abolished. The severity of laws formerly written too much in the spirit of Draco has been softened, and the reformation of offenders admitted to be the object of judicial punishment, next at least after the safety of society. In all countries possessing constitutional government, the governed have gained a larger and larger share of power, at least in proportion to their improved intelligence. And in many countries an irresponsible and despotic government has been exchanged for a constitutional one, at the like dictate of popular progress.

But is all this civilized progress merely outward, bodily and secular? Does it merely represent bodily comfort, convenience, indulgence, or at best tasteful luxury of mind? Or can it be shewn that there is a corresponding progress in moral, social and religious improvement? For this is the implied aspiration of the Messianic and Millenian beliefs. This is what Philanthropy and Faith demand. Does the world grow better in proportion to its growth in what is called Civilization? Are the virtues of civilized

life proportionate to its command of comfort and luxury ? Is its power over outward nature accompanied with a corresponding moral control over the wrongs and sufferings, the wickedness and resulting woes, of man's own nature ? Or are the great triumphs of outward civilization so often perverted to evil as to make it a questionable blessing on the whole ? Are the vices of civilized luxury so rank as to place the savage in favourable contrast ? Are the social injuries and oppressions, national and international, which still exist in civilized Europe itself, such as shame our boast of civilization ? Are we any nearer, through the progress of past centuries, to realizing that state of perpetual peace on earth, which has always been foremost in the visions, hopes and plans of philanthropists, as the nearest and dearest desire of the human heart ? Peace is admitted to be the native soil of all the arts and all the virtues, the very condition of true progress. It is the aspiration of the moralist ; it is the benediction of the Gospel. War is the world's great infidelity, its great atheism ; the collective manifestation of all barbarous passions and the spring of all conceivable misery ; of misery not sent through the operation of physical laws acting uniformly for the more general good of the rational creatures who live under them, but voluntarily caused by human agency. We might, therefore, almost limit our inquiry to the prospect which the world presents of extended and enduring peace. The realization of universal and reliable peace would be the full realization, on the widest scale, of the prophetic imagery which makes the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the lion and the calf, dwell together, with a little child tending them.*

fih: wars
great misery

* It is painful to see the more hopeless alternative maintained by the Bishop of Peterborough in his earnest *Argumentative Discourses in defence and confirmation of the Faith*, preached in Norwich Cathedral

How is it that our civilization has not yet abolished war? That, on the contrary, it has caused the wars of our own times to surpass, in murderous destruction of human life, in wastefulness of national blessings, and in last March. Surely it is not necessary to consider science, or civilization, as the *alternative* or *contrast* to Christianity, or to deny them their part in human progress, because their work is not complete without the latter also? Nor is it well to speak hopelessly of human improvement in this life in order to bring into contrast a heavenly millennium.

The good Bishop says: "The world is growing old and sick at heart. All the remedies that have been devised from time to time for the evils of society and the sorrows of humanity, have been tried to very exhaustion, and tried in vain. Idol after idol that men have set up and sacrificed to, has been rocked from its base and shivered into fragments. The gods that men have worshiped have been taken away again and again. And again and again has the cry of despair risen, 'What have we left?' Faith!—faith in the future of humanity! What answer does the past give to this? In all the past ages is there one proof that in this world, constituted as it is, there shall ever be perfection of our nature? Faith in what? Faith in science! Did science ever comfort a sorrow? Did science ever heal a broken heart? Faith in civilization? Did civilization ever yet remedy the evils that are burrowing and festering into the very heart of society? Civilization! It means in the present day the gathering of men together more and more in great masses. It means the luxurious, artistic, voluptuous life of great towns. It means the wan, weary, toilsome, haggard life of those who in those same towns must minister to that life of ease and wealth. It means the rich growing very rich. It means the poor growing very poor. Civilization has its dark shadow of degradation ever following on its track—the darker by contrast with its light. Civilization and science! Have they arrested war? Have they softened the heart of humanity? Civilization and art and science!—why, they are busy making mitrailleuses, and inventing the newest and most sweepingly destructive methods of murder! Where will you find, in any one of those things that men worship, a substitute for God? Where will you find, in these leaves of the tree of knowledge, 'the healing of the nations'? Yes! we should indeed be mocking you if we spoke, as some speak, of a coming millennium of science and art—we should indeed be mocking you if we spoke of the possibility of the moral condition of man being remedied without supernatural help. We believe in the perfection of humanity, but not in this life. We believe in a millennium yet to come—not in this world, but in that which is yet to be

embitterment of national feeling, the greatest wars of ancient times? Never were warlike horrors perpetrated on so vast a scale of death, mutilation and captivity to beligerents, of devastation and social ruin to peaceful inhabitants, of fever and pestilence following the march and thronging the siege; and poverty, debt and difficulty, entailed on the conquered and the conquerors too! The great invasions, battles, sieges of heroic or historic days, were as nothing in point of the amount of destruction caused. Such armies never marched under Xerxes,* Alexander or Cæsar; so numerous, or armed with so deadly implements of wholesale slaughter. For the deeds of personal prowess and heroism which fill the tale of Troy and the historic wars of Greece and Rome, modern warfare has substituted mechanical and chemical engines as the ultimate arbiters of life and death in national quarrels. And the blind desperation of men engaged in this hap-hazard slaughter is the chief heroism possible in civilized war! It is civilization barbarized again; invention perverted;

revealed. We believe in an eternal peace, but it is to be at the coming of the Prince of Peace." (Pp. 21, 22.)

Is not this saddening picture too undiscriminating and exaggerated, and therefore so hopeless? We may still venture to seek, along the track of the world's civilization, not "a substitute for God," but marks of His good providence over the human race; not perfection attained, but improvement going on; not the heavenly millennium reached, but earthly progress rising to a proportionately higher conception of the life to come. With Bishop Heber, we may find in the appreciated good of the present life the suggestive of the noblest heaven:

"O God, O good beyond compare!
If thus thy lower works are fair,
If these thy glories gild the span
Of mortal life and sinful man,
How glorious must those mansions be
Where thy redeemed shall dwell with thee!"

* Those who believe in the *million* of Xerxes' host, understand the larger part to have been useless non-combatants.

science debased; progress in the arts of destruction, wickedness and woe. Humanity weeps; Civilization is ashamed; Progress seems turned back; Religion cries in vain; Faith can scarcely lift up her saddened eyes to the God of all;—she drops the Cross upon the blood-stained earth! If the doctrine of progress can stand its ground in spite of the continued prevalence of war, we need scarcely discuss any other difficulties.

It is manifest that if civilization does not prevent or restrain the occasions of war, it is sure to make the practice more dreadful in proportion to that very power which science and art could apply to better purposes;—and this in spite of the more humane code of civilized warfare as regards prisoners and various other details. The question naturally occurs, Why does not civilization, which humanizes men in their social and civic relations, substituting law and police for private quarrel and revenge, apply corresponding arrangements to the preservation of order and right between nation and nation? Civilized men quarrel; but they go to their courts of justice to settle the right and the wrong. They have almost ceased (in this country quite) the semi-barbarous arbitration of duelling. But as nations, they know no authoritative court of justice; they have erected no supreme court of appeal; they are mere duellists still; mere bravos often in quarrel and defiance. And, in the present state of Europe, alas! we see few signs of mitigation of the warlike spirit, but signs rather of its increase, in the dreadful rivalry of armaments which become the constant suggestions and provocatives of war. Why, why is this, if progress is the law of human society?

It was the forlorn hope of many well-wishers of their kind, when contemplating the recent application of science and art to the production of more murderous weapons than ever before known, that *civilized war* would be felt to be

so tremendous and horrible a thing, as to be practically impossible between civilized and Christian nations. It was hoped that the Crimean war would enforce this lesson on all concerned in it. Vain hope! Greater wars have desolated Europe since, and the greatest of all is only now at an end.* Can we still hope that the dreadful lessons which it has written in blood and desolation and misery may make the populations of Europe wiser, if they cannot effectually cure the ambition and waywardness of rulers? Let us turn aside from this too near contemplation of horrors, to notice such tendencies as we can in ordinary times recognize, towards the prevalence of peace.

And, in spite of all special discouragements, we must thankfully notice that, generally speaking, *wars are rare* among civilized nations. Among savages the state of war is habitual; among civilized men it is exceptional. It is known, felt, admitted by all, that Peace is the true normal condition of human life; that it is essential for the developement of all the blessings and all the virtues of life; and that war is the reverse of all this. Nothing but the superfluity of Nature's reproductive power could disguise (*compensate*, it cannot) the ruin and desolation of human wars. Men talk, indeed, flippantly of war and armaments, as if the only measure of right between nations was that of brute or mechanical strength; or, at least, as if policy was to be the only restraint; not justice, law, benevolence or religion. Politicians talk of the chances of war with perfect coolness. Every possible or conceivable act of aggression or invasion by one country against another, every possible or conceivable combination of princes or potentates to disorganize the world, is discussed by newspaper editors and amateurs, under the tacit assumption that it will be perpetrated if ever opportunity be offered. And

* Written March, 1871.

the conclusion is constantly reiterated, that each nation must maintain itself in a condition of armed preparation adequate to resist every conceivable attack. The implied conclusion is, that man is but a wild beast, capable, however, of fighting in companies; and that his civilization makes his war-power more tremendous. The practical conclusion, alas! is, that our armed peace and armed neutrality differ little from the preliminaries of war, and are, indeed, equivalent to war in all its wastefulness and expenditure, except that of life. Yet no man seriously approves and vindicates war except for some supposed ultimate good, the very reverse of war. No true man consents to it except as a sad necessity. The memorable declaration that "the French Empire is peace," was addressed to this common sentiment of mankind, and was only unsatisfactory so far as its sincerity was doubted. Some of the greatest generals have most powerfully expressed their horror of war. Who was it that said, "the greatest calamity, next after a great defeat, was a great victory"? Washington and Wellington, among the bravest of men, both looked upon war as the saddest of necessities. Immortal are the words of the latter in proposing a measure of conciliation for Ireland: "My Lords, I have passed more of my life in war than most men; and, I may say, in civil war. And if I could avoid by any sacrifice whatever—if I could avoid even for a month—a civil war in a country to which I am attached, I would sacrifice my life to do it."

Why, then, in the face of such acknowledgments, are wars possible? The arbitrement of irrational beasts and savages, are they a fit appeal for civilized nations in their disputes? Why cannot the same progress of civilization which prohibits private quarrel and revenge, and refers all disputes to judicial authority *within each nation*, provide also an *international tribunal* and international rules for

the arbitration of differences, and even for the punishment of offenders? Considerable progress in this direction has in point of fact been made. For one quarrel or misunderstanding that breaks out in war, there are fifty that are settled by diplomatic conference or arbitration. And this mode of settlement is fast growing in use. But it must be remembered that the difficulty of establishing an authoritative tribunal among nations is infinitely greater than within each nation, every one of which may have solved it in its own internal administration. The established government of each country can bring reluctant offenders to justice in its own courts; but the international tribunal can only be established by the joint consent of all who are to be subject to its decisions; and this common consent is not easily obtained (nor, if obtained, continued in perpetuity) amid the many occasions of international jealousy, rivalry or misunderstanding. Yet a High Court of Nations is perfectly possible, and its necessity increasingly felt. We have treaties of peace, and treaties of commerce, and conventions on all sorts of occasions; and though (shame to say it) civilization has sometimes put more lax interpretations on these than the old faith of darker days allowed, still bright signs of hope are visible in the main.

The clearest sign is a wide and ever widening one. Civilized wars are never prompted, seldom approved and sustained, by popular interest or national feeling. They are, almost always, either dynastic or politic matters. They are wars of kings and emperors, or of statesmen and diplomats. A few may have been made popular by appealing to national prejudices—and all wars make contractors rich;—but in general the people of England, or any other European country engaged in war, hates it heartily all the while. It is the humbler classes chiefly who lose life or limb in their rulers' wars. And they have begun to know and feel it.

The nation at large also feels the great pressure of resulting taxation, which to the ruling classes is comparatively imperceptible. And as the people come to understand what the National Debt is, they are unwilling to increase it by new wars, unless wars of absolute necessity. An educated and enlightened people, whose will is adequately represented in the counsels of their country, will not permit wars to be lightly made. They will set their rulers to institute the required International Court of Law. This is perhaps the largest ground for hope. It rests upon the improvement and progress of the community in general.

And now it is high time that we recognize, calmly and without exaggeration, the growing and widening influence of a sentiment at once more humane and more devout, derived from Religion, coalescing with and elevating all prudential and patriotic motives to Peace. The religious sentiment which, under national and local influences, once looked for a divinely imposed reign of peace on earth and good-will among men, is now intent upon its diffusion through human effort;—not waiting for it, but working for it. Men know that it must come, if at all, through human agency, through the growing perception of right, truth, holiness and happiness. Christianity supplies the very spirit that was wanting in the ancient civilization, by its doctrines of One Heavenly Father and One Human Brotherhood, and by its spirit of religious love and faith, mutual duty and mutual trust. Every Christian statesman, every Christian people, shrinks from the thought of war. Among civilizing influences, none has been greater or more pure than the spread of Christianity. The labours of its missionaries in ancient and modern times (we need not include the Crusades among Christian missions) have been among the best illustrations of its refining influence. Mistakes have indeed been made, in modern missions especially,

by some who have too enthusiastically expected that the mere preaching of the gospel would, through special divine influence, suffice to raise the savage into the civilized man. But no such expectations were warranted by the early history of Christianity even as propagated by the apostles themselves. It does not supersede ordinary civilization, but rather carries it on towards completion. The gospel was first preached, not, for the most part, to savages, but, on the contrary, to the most civilized populations of the world ; and modern missionaries have found that, in presenting it to savages, their first work must be to teach the useful arts of civilized life. A Livingstone does not preach the gospel to the inhabitants of Central Africa, till he has shewn them how to improve their cultivation of the ground and the construction of their dwellings. It is thus that the true missionary proclaims "glory to God, and peace and good-will among men."

And hand in hand with the religious feeling that all men are brethren, made of one blood by the Great Father of all, to dwell upon all the face of the earth, goes an influence, less exalted it may seem, but more constant, more palpable, and more practically able to promote the perception of the need and blessedness of peace—that is, Commerce.

From the earliest days, Commerce has been the most constant agent of civilization. It has brought men together for mutual benefit, and made them feel mutually dependent, mutually indebted. Legitimate commerce is all peaceful ; and though, of course, it is self-remunerative (otherwise it would not exist), it is so *on both sides*. Its essence is, to be *mutually* advantageous ; and therefore, though it is not to be adduced as a pure exercise of human benevolence, it is at least an evidence of the goodness of Divine Providence, that men should be thus prompted by

immediate interest to do what is equally for the interest of others also. The spirit of free commerce is not therefore to be decried as low and selfish. There are low and selfish modes of conducting business, and there are fraudulent and wicked and nefarious things done in its name; but these things are not trade; they are trick, they are fraud, they are robbery, and sometimes worse still. Commerce has always been the greatest Peace-maker among men; though wars have occasionally been stirred up, which have had it for a pretext. What has needlessly been called its *sordidness* of spirit, has often proved an efficient safeguard against what is as wrongly called the *glory* of wanton wars. Commercial considerations have often held back kings and peoples from the too quick resort to the law of force, and kept them rational and human in spite of their first impulses.

The modern world has seen the relations of commerce multiplied and extended beyond the power of ancient imagination. To the Greeks and Romans, not to mention the Jews and those most ancient traders, the Phenicians, the Mediterranean was "the Great Sea," and the oceans beyond it were all but unknown. In the days of Augustus, one of the principal Latin poets deprecated commerce as a tempting of Providence, who had designed for ever to separate the nations that are divided by the sea. And another (whose celebration of the *Augustan Millennium* we have already referred to) makes it part of his beatific idea that foreign commerce should intirely cease, and each country produce all that it needs to consume. We have learnt to form a very different estimate of human life on the earth, and of Divine Providence as over it. Discovery, itself the child of commerce, gave new continents to the moderns, separated by oceans of before unmeasured extent; and commerce hastened to interchange the products of old worlds and new.

Commerce at home and abroad has been the continual spur to mutual intercourse among individuals and nations. That intercourse has extended not merely to the exchange of outward commodities, but at the same time to the inter-communication of science, literature and art, the intercourse of friendship and family, and the widening of philanthropy and religion. And in proportion as any nation becomes linked with any other in these bonds of interest and regard, it is felt to be impossible, and it virtually becomes so, that those two nations should exchange peaceful intercourse for war. Thus the philanthropist and the Christian see in the wide extension of Commerce, the most palpable pledge of Peace and consequent Human Progress.

The present age, which has seen these marvels of inter-communication multiplied beyond all precedent, by the application of steam-power to ships and railways, and the yet more wonderful application of electricity to the purposes of speech from town to town, from nation to nation, from continent to continent, ought to have faith in the providential tendency of human life to moral and religious as well as secular advancement. If, amid recurring jealousies between the inhabitants of one country and another, a reasonable confidence has been felt, and again and again justified by the event, that the bonds of commerce existing between them are so many effectual bonds of prudence added to those of duty and Christian feeling, in the interests of peace, still more are these beneficent bonds strengthened by that little wire which facilitates speech, but cannot carry armies if we desired !

A doubt as to the progressive improvement of mankind has been felt by some theorists to arise from what has been called the *Law of Population*. Mr. Malthus's theory that population tends to increase faster than the means of subsistence, has been thought by some (who have perhaps

misapprehended it) to forbid all hope of elevating the mass of mankind above abject poverty, and the low intellectual and moral condition which that commonly implies. It is thought a hopeless task to endeavour to improve the human condition, if the lower orders of society are necessarily doomed to want and wretchedness in increasing numbers. And so indeed it might be, if any such absolute Law was enforced upon mankind. But this is a mistaken view of the great facts of the world, and even of the Malthusian theory. No doubt, if a certain community is found to double its numbers in twenty-five or thirty years without immigration or emigration, there is the same *potential* faculty of doubling again in the next twenty-five or thirty years, *supposing* that the means of subsistence can be increased in proportion. And it is very true that, within the compass of any ordinary-sized realm, the power of perpetually doubling the produce of its land in like periods must, in the course of centuries at any rate, cease. And in that case it might truly be said, that population was pressing upon the means of subsistence, if by any absolute law of Nature, or even of human government, it was also made impossible to bring additional food into that country, or to let any of its population go away to less thickly-peopled countries. If England were under such conditions, certainly its population would now be "pressing hard upon the means of subsistence." But under the blessing of free commerce (designed by Providence, and now accepted by the English nation and its government after many centuries of legislative restraint) we every day bring, in exchange for our useful manufactures, immense additions of food from other countries that are larger, more productive and less populous than our own; and we allow and even encourage the adventurous among our increasing population to seek new homes in lands open to their colonization. In

point of fact, therefore, it is not true that population, in this country, does even yet press upon the means of subsistence. Nor has it ever been true on the wider scale of the world, that population has been too large for its then existing productiveness. It is not therefore this *theoretical* pressure upon the means of subsistence that defies human progress. The *actual* pressure, in whatever degree it prevails, is the practical incitement to industry, adventure and contrivance;—it is, in fact, one of the means of progress. Till the endless tracts of fertile land in America North and South, in South Africa, in Australia, shall be reduced to cultivation, the world cannot be said to be over-peopled. We may, therefore, adjourn this part of the question *sine die*, and believe that it will diminish, if not vanish, through the increased prudence and forethought which a state of advanced civilization and general education suggests, restraining those reckless early marriages which cause the family to press too soon and rapidly upon the parental resources. There is no need to advocate celibacy, but simply wisdom and forethought in the great affairs of civilized life.

Nor need we seriously consider, except to reprobate, that doubly horrible suggestion of social pessimists, that a state of often recurring war is a seasonable check upon the too rapid increase of population. The supposed remedy, in fact, doubles the evil; for it kills off the strong men of the population who are capable of productive labour, and leaves behind it an increase of the helpless classes—maimed soldiers, widows and orphan children—to be provided for by a country disabled by the new debts and embarrassments of war. The suggestion is worthy only of a Mephistophiles. Let our argument for human progress rest, then, for the present with the Submarine Telegraph and all that it implies, of intercommunication, mutual dependence and ser-

vice. Let all the means of intercourse which civilization has continually multiplied between nation and nation, be regarded in their true light, as the still growing means and occasions of mutual blessings, the proofs of identical or mutual interests better and better understood, all dependent upon peace for their existence, continuance and extension,—whereas the chief intercourse between distant or even neighbouring nations in ancient times was that of war, arising out of the mutual jealousies of ignorant selfishness ;—and we shall find some reason to trust that the great course of Providence responds to the cheerful doctrine of the Gospel, that “God hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell upon all the face of the earth.”

And if, after all, the difficulties and discouragements which have not been disguised in this Chapter beset from time to time our natural hopes and Christian desires for human progress, let us fall back upon the conscious faculty itself, which we all have, of aspiring, hoping and striving. Let us reasonably feel that this aspiration is itself the eternal promise in our better nature, giving impulse to ever renewed effort in ourselves, and similarly in our species at large. It is a faith that, like all moral faiths, fulfils itself by being earnestly cherished. It surmounts evil by pursuing good. It makes the world better by acting upon the belief that it can be made better. Its hopes and desires are the ultimate pledge of human perfectibility ; its efforts are the means of human progress. The Jewish believer in a coming Messiah prepared for the kingdom beforehand in his own heart ; the temporal-minded patriot was ready for a new Davidic kingdom ; the spiritual-minded welcomed Jesus of Nazareth as his Lord. So he who believes in the capacity of his race for something better and better continually, realizes it in himself and promotes it in many around him. Men’s efforts follow their ideal.

Possunt quia posse videntur. The aspiration is proof and pledge both of the power and the tendency to better and better. Nay, even the sadness and despondency with which good men often look upon the course of human affairs, doubting against their will and disappointed of their once sanguine hopes, is but another form of divine pledge in human nature itself for its improvement and progress. The old Preacher, who so sadly declared, "All is vanity," disproved his text by the sadness and regret with which he said it. The soul that thinks life vain, is not itself a vain thing; nor will life continue vain to it.

CHAPTER XI.

MARAN-ATHA : " OUR LORD COMETH."

MARAN-ATHA seems to have been a kind of watchword among the early Christians, especially in Syria (to the dialect of which the words belong), to remind each other of the expected return of Christ to the earth. *Maran* is Syriac for *Our Lord*, and *atha* for *cometh*, or *is come*; or it may express the desire, *May our Lord come!* Whence, according to Grotius and others, the Syrian Christians about Lebanon were called *Maranites* or *Maronites*.

There is a curious passage in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (xvi. 22), where these Syriac words stand untranslated and unintelligible to the English reader. The Common Version has: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha," which is commonly taken as a mysterious curse, intensified by two unknown tongues,—for *Anathema* is Greek. When both are translated into English, the apostle really says: "The salutation of me Paul is with my own hand. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be separated (Anathema) from you. Our Lord is coming (Maran-atha). The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen."

It may be useful to recapitulate the occasions on which, according to Scripture and history, our Lord has actually come, and in what sense or under what manifestation.

(1.) Once personally, in his life on earth, all agree that

he came ; and in that sense he came once for all. That life had never been lived before, nor is to be lived again. It was unique in its perfection, its influence, its consequences. It stands engraved in human love, reverence and gratitude. The facts of that life have indeed been doubted and disputed. All the solvents of sceptical criticism have been perseveringly applied to it, with a view to discharge its brightest colouring. What was very unreasonably called *rationalism*, endeavoured for a while—in Germany under the lead of Dr. Paulus—to explain it as having had in it nothing extraordinary, but as having been loaded with many exaggerations in telling. Disgusted with such strained attempts to explain it away, the advocates of the *mythical* theory next tried, with Strauss, to resolve the alleged facts of Christ's mortal life into *theological and moral ideas*, mythically set forth in imaginary narratives. But we have in turn seen the most recent sceptical philosophy protesting earnestly against this mythical theory as unnatural, while standing, in the person of M. Renan, in the vales of Galilee, and tracing the traditional haunts of Jesus thence; step by step, to Jerusalem, and declaring that the history must be essentially true, the facts mainly real; that the person (long supposed by him to have been mythical or traditionary) must be an historical and well-defined personage, whose life has impressed itself for ever upon the world in characters of light and beauty. The attempted philosophical Life of Jesus, reconstructed on what are thought natural principles, may indeed fail to satisfy his disciples ; but it asserts strongly and heartily the reality both of that life and of its moral and spiritual influence on the world. "Our Lord is come," not as a myth, but as a reality.

(2.) In the fulfilment of his most remarkable prophecy he declared he should "come again." In uttering it he had

ventured to say : "Heaven and earth may pass away, but my words cannot pass away." The terms of that prediction, when compared with the history of the destruction of Jerusalem as given by Josephus (himself an eye-witness), are so remarkably descriptive, as to prove the divine inspiration of one who could utter the prophecy nearly forty years before. The one question on which we chiefly require to be satisfied is, whether the alleged prophecy *was really written down* before the events came to pass. And of this we have not only the united testimony of Christian antiquity to the authorship of the three Gospels in which this prediction is recorded ; we have also the singularly conclusive internal evidence of the prophecy itself there recorded, in which the mixture of the mistaken Jewish expectation as to the personal coming of Christ is as striking, as is the pictorial truthfulness of the predicted siege. Whence it seems plain that the evangelists had written down their accounts of our Lord's prediction *before* the destruction of Jerusalem came to pass ; for they have mixed with it their own false hope of his personal return, which *after* the event they must have known had not been fulfilled. Then it was that our Lord truly came into his wider kingdom, when his prophecy was so remarkably fulfilled.

(3.) From that time forth, his kingdom grew with more and more rapid growth, though not with outwardly observed signs like those of temporal kingdoms. While Jerusalem had stood and its temple rites had gone on, Christianity had seemed to Roman eyes a mere variety of Judaism, and to the Jews in general (who would not part with their national rites) it had been an imperfect and heretical Judaism. But the temple fell ; the daily sacrifice ceased, and ceremonial Judaism was no more. Then the *End of that Age* was manifestly come. Then a *New Age* began. The Kingdom of Heaven came on earth with power. The con-

flict of the new monotheistic faith, its pure morals and immortal hope, with the formal, immoral and cheerless paganisms of the world, spread fast from land to land, till, in two centuries more, the vast Roman Empire in general had accepted the Gospel of glad-tidings with the collective welcome : " Maran-atha, our Lord is come."

And everywhere and always since, wherever and whenever this Gospel is loved and followed, " the Lord truly cometh," among all holy and true and good people.

He is come in the pure beliefs which we have learnt from his Gospel ; in our knowledge of God as our Heavenly Father and the Heavenly Father of all mankind ; in the spiritual worship with which we are taught by Christ to approach Him ;—our trust in his all-embracing and all-loving providence ;—our belief in the life spiritual and immortal, which makes the present mortal life spiritual too.

He is come in his pure and benevolent morality, which teaches man how to live and how to die, referring human duty to the will of God as its source, and to the interpretation of conscience as its expounder, making self-love the guide to social, measuring the good and evil of actions by the motives within.

Maran-atha ! our Lord cometh (and may he come more and more near to each professing disciple !) when the power of his life and example moves us ; when his history interprets to us the " high capacious powers which lie folded up in man ;" when his example, which has been the world's best ideal for eighteen centuries, becomes our practical inspiration and daily guide ; when his spirit leads us to duty and helps us in toil or trial ; when, with his apostle, " we know both how to be abased and how to abound, and are able to do and bear all through Christ strengthening us."

Thus, in the pages of his written life, in the power of his recorded example, in the image of Duty, Love, Faith, Hope,

which he has inscribed upon our minds and consciences, he is "with us always (if we desire to be with him) to the end of the world." Better than any expectation of his bodily re-appearance will be our reverence for the impress which he has left upon the world's heart. And if the continued crimes of man against man and nation against nation tempt us despondingly to cry, How long, O Lord? where is the promised kingdom of heaven on earth? for all things go on as they did from the beginning of creation;—let us at least correct our own false ideas of the laws of God's moral government over mankind. Let us learn that the only solid hope of true progress is through the growth of truth, virtue and religion in the individual soul, and so through the community.

May this kingdom come with increased power! with power so diffusive as no Messianic Judaism shining forth from Jerusalem could exert,—more subtile in its access to the soul than Papal influence has ever been,—and all moral, all virtuous, all beneficent, to whatever extent it can prevail over the ignorance, the selfishness, the pride, the luxury, the false glory of the world! Let Christians hope still, even when against visible hope; and labour still, however small their individual power, for the coming of the kingdom of God and Christ on earth. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

[While my book is passing through the press, I am made aware by an anonymous critic of my Prospectus (not in the most courteous manner) that it is possible for a modern student of Sanscrit to interpret the words *Anathema Maranatha* as a terrific curse. But, as I have no reason to suppose the Apostle Paul had studied Sanscrit, while I know that his native tongue was the Aramaic Hebrew, and that he was a proficient in Greek, I acquiesce without shame in the interpretation of sound old Greek and Hebrew commentators, more especially as the suggested Sanscrit interpretation would add neither to the appropriateness nor to the Christian humanity of the passage.]

CHAPTER XII.

THE FUTURE LIFE.

IT ought not to be matter of surprise that the Messianic hope should, in various stages of its developement, have been mixed or confounded, in some degree, with that of a Future Life. We have seen that this actually happened. And nothing was more natural in the circumstances ; for they are both parts of the general belief in human progress or perfectibility, different aspects of

“the unquenched hope
That breathes from day to day sublimer things
And mocks possession.”

But it will be well that we should now carefully detach the revealed doctrine of a Future Life from this casual admixture, by a distinct statement of its principles and evidences. And in doing this, we can hardly avoid looking at the subject of a Future Life more generally. We may appropriately bring into view the natural feeling respecting it, and the natural arguments in its favour ; trace briefly the history of its belief and its denial apart from the influence of Revelation ; and then notice the place which it held among Jewish beliefs ; and, lastly, the contribution made to it by Christianity.

[**NATURAL BELIEF.**] The belief in a future state is sometimes represented as *instinctive*. It might be more strictly correct to say that it is directly suggested by one of the

most powerful of our instincts, namely, the love of life. The love of life is strong, because life (generally speaking) is prevailingly happy. So the love of life suggests the wish that life was not so soon over, and the wondering inquiry whether death is its final extinction, and the hope, more or less confident, that life may prevail over dissolution, or be renewed in some other state of being.

It would seem that the simple and uncultivated mind of the savage feels little or no difficulty about believing in a future life. The consciousness of something not bodily as constituting the real human self, easily adopts the idea of a separate existence, making light of the difficulties which reasoning philosophy afterwards finds as to the nature of the present connection between mind and body, the possibility of the mind's separate existence, or of its union with a new bodily constitution. The uncivilized or uneducated man is not perplexed with difficulties about the *how*, *when* or *where* of a renewed existence. Pope's "poor Indian of untutored mind" is a true picture of this natural faith in a future life:

" Yet simple Nature to his hope has given,
Behind the cloud-topt hill, a humbler heaven.
He thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company."

The simplest beliefs in a future state have usually regarded it as *retributory*. The inequalities of the present state, the want of thorough adjustment between conduct and happiness, and (perhaps most of all) the occurrence of early deaths, have led (under the belief of a Ruling Moral Power) to the thought of future compensations and of appropriate rewards and punishments. The doctrine of the Transmigration of Souls, so widely prevalent in the East, is essentially a doctrine of retribution and pur-

gation, of discipline and ultimate blessing. This theory, which simply ignores the physical and metaphysical difficulties of more scientific days, shews how easily men, in early times, conceived of the soul's existence apart from its present body, and assigned what they thought appropriate modes of retributive existence to every human character.

Speaking generally, then, we may say, that a belief in a future life appears natural to human beings. It is the general hope of mankind, when undisciplined by philosophy, as well as unvisited by divine revelation. The wish may be "father to the thought;" but the thought is there, and very simple reflection sanctions it. As natural and general as is the conviction that the thinking, feeling and loving principle, of which we are all conscious possessors, is something different from the bodily limbs, organs and senses through which it acts during life, equally natural and general appears to be the conclusion, that, when the body dies, the thinking, feeling and loving principle does not necessarily die with it; and the hope, if not belief, that it may live a new life independent of the deceased body, whether combined or not with some other bodily frame. The immortality of the soul is thus the suggestion even of unenlightened man. Just as the belief now prevails among the Red Indians of North America, the Hottentots of Africa, and the simple inhabitants of the Polynesian islands, it prevailed among our own heathen ancestors in Britain, and among most, if not all, the other heathen nations of history, and doubtless among those whose history has never been written. It is the natural hope of the human heart; and also the simple faith of the intellect while untrained to appreciate the speculative difficulties which beset every clearly defined conception of the doctrine.

[FABLES.] But this germinal faith has been, and is, by its uncultured believers, just as naturally held in constant combination with the silliest and most grotesque details of various kinds. The transmigration of souls into other animal, and even vegetable, forms, as believed by the Hindoos at this day and anciently by the Egyptians;—the Red Indians' heavenly hunting-grounds beyond the hills;—the old Scandinavians' Valhalla for departed heroes;—the Elysian fields and Tartarus of the Greek and Roman mythology;—are so many examples of the humiliation to which this instinctive hope of the soul has been subjected by the crude efforts of reason to define it and embody it in distinct forms.

[SCEPTICISM.] Then the next step in the history of civilized nations has constantly and naturally been, to discredit all these grotesque thoughts respecting the future life; and with them, alas! too generally to destroy the belief itself. The history of Greek and Roman thought (which is thoroughly known to us) shews this course of things to have taken place. With the progress of civilization, those old beliefs were seen to be inconsistent with the dictates of enlightened reason. The Greek philosophers, and after them the Roman, with one consent rejected all those concrete forms of thought in which the future life had been embodied as a popular belief. They did not hesitate, within their own select circle of cultivated minds, to ridicule the popular mythology for its absurd histories of the gods, as well as its strange pictures of the future state;—though their own higher belief did not prevent them meanwhile from encouraging, and even conforming to, the vulgar superstitions. Cicero, in a discussion on Death, makes one of his interlocutors say:

“Tell me, I beg; you are not frightened surely at those things—the three-headed Cerberus among the infernals? the roar-

ing stream of Cocytus? the ferry over Acheron? Tantalus dying of thirst and only able to touch the surface of the water with his chin? Or Sisyphus who rolls his stone toilfully, but makes no progress? Or even, may be, those inexorable judges, Minos and Rhadamanthus, before whom you will have no L. Crassus nor M. Antonius to plead your cause; nor (these judges being Greeks) will you be able to avail yourself of Demosthenes; you will have to plead your own cause on the highest issues."

To this the other speaker replies:

"Do you think me such a dotard as to believe that these things are real? What difficulty is there in disproving such prodigies of the poets and painters? Who is so stupid as to be moved by such things?" *

In the same treatise he afterwards asks:

"Where is there an old woman to be found so doting as to fear the Acherusian temples, the depths of Orcus, the pale cloudy regions of death, overspread with darkness? (which you yourselves would fear if you had not studied physical science)." †

And in his treatise on the Nature of the Gods, while arguing nobly for the Divine existence, he again pours contempt upon the popular beliefs:

"We see that other opinions, of a vain and fictitious kind, have pined away in the course of time. For who thinks there ever was a Hippocentaur, or a Chimæra? Or what old woman can be found so stupid as to fear those prodigies which were formerly believed to exist among the shades below? For time blots out the fancies of human opinion, but confirms the decisions of nature" (*Opinionum enim commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat*).‡

These are the words of Cicero, whose biographer Midleton truly observes in quoting some of them:

* Cicero, *Tusc. Quest.* i. 5, 6.

† *Ibid.* i. 21.

‡ *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 2.

"The liberty which not only he, but all the old writers take, in ridiculing the characters of their gods and the fictions of their infernal torments, shews that there was not a man of liberal education who did not consider it [the religion of his country] as an engine of state, or political system, contrived for the uses of government and to keep the people in order. In this light Cicero always commends it as a wise institution, singularly adapted to the genius of Rome; and constantly inculcates an adherence to its rites, as the duty of all good citizens."*

This description is essentially applicable also to the intelligent Greeks in their earlier philosophical period. Among them, as among the Romans after them, the old traditional beliefs both in the popular gods and in the popular heaven and hell, were intirely disowned by philosophers and educated men within the circles of their friends and disciples; though their higher personal beliefs did not prevent them from encouraging the vulgar superstitions, and even conforming to them in their own persons. The severe irony of the old Jewish historian might have been well applied to them: "They feared the Eternal, and served their graven images." Our present subject is directly concerned with their conduct in reference to the belief in a future state, rather than their other heathen conformities. By thus sanctioning the vulgar superstitions which they despised in their hearts, they seem to have virtually acknowledged their own inability to substantiate a better belief, or their hopelessness of making level to the common mind their own purer faith and the reasons which had convinced them of its truth. In investigating the belief of these philosophers we must therefore bear in mind, that it was the belief only of the select few, not of Greeks or Romans in general.

Let us now look more closely into the *philosophy* of

* Middleton's *Life of Cicero*, Vol. II. p. 505.

the future life as it was expounded by the wisest men of antiquity;—see what they really believed respecting it, and how they proved, illustrated or vindicated their belief.

[GREEK PHILOSOPHY.] From the records of the Greek philosophers—those acute-minded seekers after wisdom—we may select the very deliberate thoughts of the one wisest and best among them all; only premising:

- (1.) That the various sects differed widely as to both the fact and the manner of the future state;
- (2.) That the Pythagoreans maintained the transmigration of souls (having probably derived it from Egypt);
- (3.) That the Stoics (the most earnest, moral and rigid sect of all) maintained the survival of the soul separately from the body; but (strange to say) did not maintain its *immortality* in that renewed existence;
- (4.) That the Epicureans had no belief in a future state; and
- (5.) That the later Academicians (the representatives of the school of Plato) regarded the highest truths as only probable, and none of them as certain; while
- (6.) The Pyrrhonists, or Sceptics, thought it the characteristic of the philosopher to believe nothing, because everything was utterly uncertain.

[SOCRATES.] So let us interrogate Socrates,—the one sage whose wisdom was pre-eminently practical, and whose virtue was the admiration of all his contemporaries; and whose discussion on this great subject of immortality is preserved to us, embellished by the genius of his favourite disciple Plato (the disciple more eminent for poetic genius than the master);—the discussion which he held with his disciples while waiting for the cup of poison with which his country's judges had decreed that his services as a teacher of wisdom should be requited. In these clear and

express terms Socrates declares his personal conviction of a future life :

“If, indeed, I did not think, in the first place, that I am about to go to wise and good gods elsewhere, and also to men already dead who are better than those who live here, I should do wrong not to grieve at death. But be well assured that I hope to find myself among good men as well as gods. Of this, indeed, I cannot speak quite certainly ; but that I expect to find myself with gods who are thoroughly kind rulers, be assured I am as thoroughly certain as I can be of anything of the kind. Wherefore I do not grieve at death as I might otherwise ; but I am in good hope that something still awaits the dead, and (as has been long ago taught) something far better for the good than for the bad.”*

The death of Socrates, as narrated in the *Phædo*, is that of a man who really and firmly holds the faith expressed in these noble words. A Christian, indeed, could scarcely realize more fully than he seems to have done, the feeling of life in death, at least as awaiting souls already purified by philosophy ; to whom, indeed, he afterwards limits his argument in these words :

“To you (as if you were my judges) I will render my reasons why it seems to me that a man who has really employed his life about philosophy may be cheerful at the point of death, and have good hope of enjoying the greatest blessings after he is dead.” (Ch. viii.)

“What is death?” Socrates proceeds to ask ; and answers :

“It is the separation of the soul from the body ; nothing more. The philosopher cares nothing for sensual pleasures. So far as he can, he abstracts his attention from the body and fixes it upon the soul. When the mind is abstracted from bodily agencies and aims at absolute truth, it feels itself independent of the body. The body is a constant impediment to its progress.

* *Phædo*, ch. viii.

If we are ever to know anything really, we must get rid of this obstacle, and look at things with the soul. Then we shall attain what we seek, knowledge of the truth ; that is, not during our life, but after death. This separation, this liberation, is what men call Death. And those who are true philosophers desire it most. If a man labours under the load of the body, and seeks to have his soul liberated from it, would he not be very absurd if he did not go there willingly where he hopes to obtain the wisdom which he has longed for all his life?" (Ch. xii.)

In another part of the dialogue, Socrates particularizes his belief, or fancy, more fully, but with less confidence in the more specific statements. Indeed, he introduces the more minute details as "a beautiful myth" (an allegory or instructive fable, that is) "worth hearing."

Amidst a curious *physical* theory of the structure of the earth,—which is, of course, utterly absurd in the light of modern astronomical and geological science, but in which he finds room for various centres of human residence (he calls them hollows or concavities), also for an upper ethereal world, and an internal world too,—he brings out (what is the real kernel of *moral* truth) his belief in future retributions according to the conduct of this life. He says (in brief) :

" Such being the arrangement of the world, each person as he dies is led away by the presiding demon or spirit (who has attended him through life) to undergo judgment. Those who are found to have lived a moderately virtuous life are carried along the river Acheron to the Acherusian marsh, and, during their residence there are punished for their offences, purified and absolved, receiving suitable rewards also for their good actions. Those who, through great crimes, such as repeated sacrilege and many murders, seem beyond cure, are thrown into the gulf of Tartarus, never to escape from it. Those whose sins, though great, are not incurable (as violence to parents or homicide, in

anger, already repented of), must also be thrown into Tartarus ; but after a year's punishment there, they emerge and seek pardon of those whom they have injured. If this be granted, they are removed to the purgatorial marsh before named, and end their sufferings ; if it be refused, they are sent back to Tartarus ; and so again till the pardon of the injured be obtained. But those who are found to have lived eminently holy lives, are set free from those realms within the earth, as from a prison, and ascend to the pure region of the upper earth. Such of these as have been sufficiently purified by philosophy live ever afterwards apart from the body, and go into yet more beautiful dwelling-places, such as it is not easy, if I had time, to describe." (Ch. lxii.)

Here, then, under the veil of fable or myth (by which we understand him to mean that these local and tangible descriptions are not to be taken literally), this good and great man expressed a firm belief in proportionate retributions as belonging to a future life,—ameliorative in their influence,—such as are worthy of the Christian's hope, and infinitely more accordant with the holiness and benevolence of the Heavenly Father, more worthy too of our spiritual conception of the future state, than many representations now prevalent in the Christian world.

But from these passages, which express the personal hope of the dying Socrates and his general idea of a future life, we turn with all curiosity and eagerness to learn by what arguments or proofs he endeavours, as a philosopher, to sustain his noble doctrine, as being those on which his own personal belief was founded.

And here we are wofully disappointed on behalf of Philosophy, if we are made the more truly thankful for the Gospel. His proofs seem poor and childish, in proportion as his faith is rich, manly and religious. Whether the reasonings are really those of Socrates, or of Plato who

draws up the dialogue, is an unsettled question of criticism ; but certainly the arguments seem sadly weak and puerile by which that manly faith is sustained.

These are mainly three :

(1.) That everything in nature has risen out of its contrary, and leads to its contrary ; therefore, as life ends in death, death must end in life.

(2.) That our present knowledge is only our recollection of knowledge gained in a former state. Hence our pre-existence is argued, and our future existence inferred.

(3.) That the mind is a simple, uncompounded substance or essence, and therefore is imperishable.

Not without reason do the admirers of Socrates doubt whether he can really have adduced such trifling arguments while professing so sublime a faith. But in thus attempting to vindicate Socrates we only disparage Plato, and the result is the same as regards the natural knowledge of a future state. We have the fact of Socrates's firm belief ; we have the records of the arguments on which he, or Plato, or both combined, endeavoured to sustain it.

The first of the three arguments has no weight with any modern reasoner. It is a *petitio principii*. If opposites imply their opposites, it does not follow that they arise from or are caused by them. If right implies wrong, who shall say that all right comes out of wrong, and all wrong from right ? If day follows night, and night day, who shall say that day causes or necessitates night, and night day ? They are both caused by the revolution of the earth. *Sleep* is the opposite of *wake*, and sleeping implies having been awake, and waking implies having been asleep. So Socrates argues that dying implies living again. But does fire imply water as its opposite ? and did it arise from water ? Does virtue involve vice as its cause or necessary antecedent ? If infancy necessarily precedes youth, does it also follow

youth? Or if youth precedes age, does age give place to youth again? We wonder to read such ingenious trifling under the names of Socrates and Plato.

For the second argument, modern philosophers have endeavoured to find something analogous in the doctrine of *innate* ideas and *abstract* conceptions. Because a boy could tell, the first time he was asked (having, however, first learnt to count), that two and three make five, Socrates concluded (or Plato in his name) that he must have learnt it in a previous state of being. And from our power of forming abstract notions (such as *greatness*, *goodness*, *equality*, &c.), he insisted that we had previously lived; and therefore, with the first argument added, that we must live again after death. But though modern metaphysicians may kindly explain to us that by *remembered* knowledge Socrates meant what we call *abstract* ideas, no one will be so complaisant as to found an argument for a future life on our admitted power of abstraction. The high capacities of the human mind in general may be a true argument, and one may wonder that Socrates did not employ it. What he employed was the false idea that the power of abstraction was an exercise of remembered knowledge, proving our pre-existence and therefore our future existence.

His third argument asserts what is doubtful, and infers what would not necessarily follow from it if true. Who shall say the mind is simple or uncompounded, when it consists of so many faculties? And do we really know, twenty centuries after Socrates, that a simple substance or essence, bodily or mental, is imperishable by virtue of its being uncompounded? It was a dogma of the early theoretic philosophy, which modern inductive philosophy has not yet established, nor even thought of much importance to investigate.

So we leave Socrates avowing his right manly and reli-

gious faith at the dictate of his conscious faculties and desires, but vindicating it as an exercise of ingenious argument, to disciples ready to assent through personal reverence.

[ROMAN PHILOSOPHY.] The best and most philosophical Roman writers on the subject of a future life, present a similar default of conclusive argument. The Romans were, in philosophy as in literature, imitators and translators of the Greeks, rather than originators of anything new. In philosophy they brought the strong practical mind which distinguished them as a nation, to bear upon the subtle reasonings of the Greek schools. For our present purpose we need consult only one Roman author, Cicero, whose ambition it was, in this department, to make the Roman youth acquainted with the Greek philosophy, by reproducing it in the most attractive forms he could in their own language, and whose philosophical works present it in its most accessible, and certainly its most pleasant, form to modern readers.

[CICERO.] Cicero called himself an Academic philosopher, but had about him that eclectic (or selecting) spirit which was ready to adopt and assimilate true and great thoughts from any or all schools, without restricting himself to the precise beliefs of any one. Among his very voluminous writings, those on Human Duty (which are numerous and copious) might, one is apt to think, have given natural occasion for an appeal to the future life as the highest sanction of duty; yet the sanctions to which he appeals are altogether temporal. He has, however, a treatise expressly on the subject of surmounting the fear of death (*De Contemnendā Morte*),* in which the belief in a future life is continually alluded to, as possible or probable; but the alternative of there being *no future life* is as con-

* *Tusculan Discussions*, Book i.

tinually weighed in his philosophical balance; and the argument is repeated to very weariness, through that and others of his works,—that, if death be annihilation, it is in that case no evil, because when annihilated we cannot be conscious either of evil or of good; but if it be transition to another life, then death is a good. Therefore, he concludes, it should in neither event be an object of dread.

In this ever-repeated argument we cannot fail to notice both the tone of incomplete conviction as to the reality of a future life, and also the utter absence of the thought that such future life may be a scene of retributory punishment. The fact seems to be that, in Cicero's hands, the question is narrowed to that of a life for souls purified by philosophy, and that the varied retributions of a future state for men in general (which Socrates touched as a subordinate topic) is not included in these Ciceronian discussions. We miss also, throughout them all, the cogent argument for a future, which arises from the unequal retributions of happiness and suffering in the present state; an argument which, however, implies a higher faith in a just and benevolent Providence than heathenism supplied.

Yet Cicero has, in various passages of this treatise, contributed much more to the argumentative belief in immortality than Socrates or Plato. He has argued it nobly and reasonably from the fact that the desire of immortality is always strongest in the best and most advanced minds—these being, he says, the true, as they are the best, specimens of human nature; from the varied and wonderful powers of the soul, its activity and self-motion; and from its simplicity and unmixed essence. The last mentioned (which may be regarded as a mere assumption, if not a mere phrase, in ancient metaphysics) is one of the arguments previously ascribed to Socrates; the others are more worthy of the subject than all the rest. They are indeed

among the best and most abiding natural arguments for immortality.

In his treatise on *Old Age*, the belief in a future state is expressed by Cicero in a noble passage, perhaps the noblest and the least hesitating (yet not quite without the customary hesitation and ever-suggested alternative), that can be found in his writings. He represents his old man, Cato the Elder, as speaking thus to his two young friends, in tender words which make us feel how the writer's affection for his own lost son inspires the hope of re-union :

" I am transported with the desire of seeing your fathers whom I have loved and honoured ; nor do I desire to meet those only whom I have known, but those also of whom I have heard and read and have myself written. And now that I am going thither, I should not easily be induced to return and be made young again like Pelias. If some god should grant me to become a child again from my present age, and again to cry in the cradle, I should earnestly refuse it, nor wish, as it were at the end of the race, to be recalled to the starting-place. For what advantage has life ? What labour rather has it not ? But be it otherwise,—it has at least its measure and satiety. For I am not disposed to wail away my life, as many (and learned men too) have often done ; nor do I regret having lived, since I have so lived as to think I was not born in vain ; and I am departing from life as from a lodging, not as from my home ; for what nature has given us is as a house of call, not a dwelling-place. O goodly day, when I shall go to that divine assemblage of souls, and leave this crowd and turmoil behind ! For I shall go not only to those distinguished men of whom I have already spoken, but also to my own Cato, than whom there was never born a better man, nor one more eminent for filial piety ; whose body I committed to the funeral pile, instead of his doing it (as he fitly should) to mine. But his soul, not deserting me, but looking back at me, is gone to those realms to which he saw that I too must go. I have seemed to bear my misfortune bravely :—it is not that I

could bear it without emotion ; but I have constantly consoled myself with thinking that there would be no great interval between his departure and my own. In these respects, Scipio (for you said that you as well as Lælius often wonder), old age is light to me,—not only not troublesome, but even pleasant. But if I am mistaken in believing that the souls of men are immortal, I am willing to be mistaken ; nor do I choose that this mistake, which I delight in, shall ever be wrested from me while I live. Then if when I am dead (as some minute philosophers are of opinion) I shall be without perception, I have no fear of being laughed at for my mistake by the dead philosophers. And if we are not to be immortal, still it is desirable for man to die in his due time. For Nature has her measure of life, as of everything else. Now old age is the completion of life, as of a drama, the weary exhaustion of which we ought to shun, especially when satiety has been given. This then is what I had to say about Old Age ; and I wish you may both come to it, that you may be able to test by experience what you have heard from me."

(Conclusion of *De Senectute*.)

These, then, are beyond comparison the two most interesting and most thorough illustrations that are to be found of the belief held by the wisest and best men, in ancient Greece and Rome, as to a future life, or (what to them was equivalent) the immortality of the soul :—Socrates with his manly, believing soul and child's-play arguments (if they are his and not Plato's);—Cicero with his prevailing belief, better argued, but continually checked by the counterbalance of doubt. We might fairly conclude from this survey, that the voice of Nature was not very clear in asserting a future life ; and also that such men as Socrates and Cicero would gladly have welcomed clearer light, if they could anywhere have seen it, in confirmation of their own best hopes and desires, and (far more than that) as enabling them and impelling them to impart those hopes

to their fellow-men, in place of the disbelieved yet professed absurdities of heathenism.

Let us now turn to the records of divine revelation, in the Old Testament first, and then in the New; and carefully observe the state of this belief, and the evidences offered on its behalf, under Judaism and under Christianity respectively.

[JUDAISM.] In searching the Hebrew Scriptures we have to bear in mind, that they contain the thoughts of the best and wisest men of the nation as preserved in a literature extending probably over a thousand years. If Moses wrote his own laws, and if the book of Job is referable to as ancient a period, we have Jewish literature nearly 1500 years older than the time of Christ, while the last prophet, Malachi, comes down to about 440 years B.C. But, as the first book of Moses runs back to long ages before the law-giver's own time, recording the traditionary doings and sayings of the patriarchs, and of the antediluvians before them, we have in fact the historical and traditional thoughts and feelings of men on religious subjects for much more than the thousand years during which those records are believed to have been successively written. Through all this long period, then, of the Antediluvian, Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, we have to notice such glimpses as the Old Testament Scriptures give us of the hope beyond death, as having animated the men to whom the Almighty made Himself in any special ways known.

Let it be avowed in the outset, that among the recorded revelations of the Old Testament, there is not any distinct verbal declaration of a future state. No vision teaches it to antediluvian or patriarch; in no passage of the Law of Moses is the future life announced; no prophet comes commissioned to "abolish death and bring life and immortality to light." The position taken by Bishop Warburton,

about ninety years ago, is generally accepted, namely, that Moses did not declare a future life. Whatever may be thought of the Bishop's argument hence in favour of the *Divine Legation of Moses*, it is certain that, in the Mosaic Law, the highest sanction for obedience was the promise of prosperity in "the land which Jehovah giveth."

All that we find in the Old Testament bearing upon our subject, is of quite another kind. It is not in the expressions of inspired teachers, but in the aspirations and hopes, or in the griefs and despondency, of those who had been taught. In the way in which the Hebrews spoke of their dead, we see, it may be, the trace of this blessed hope, or mark its blank absence. A customary phrase in their language here and there may have embalmed an early belief. Their meditative and devotional poetry is sure to bring out the thought, if it belongs to the poet's mind. The writings of Jewish moralists, endeavouring to define, explain and enforce human duty, and inquiring after the true aim and end of human life, will be sure to appeal to this high sanction, if the belief was generally admitted among the people to whom such writings were addressed. These are the kind of intimations of a belief in a future life which we shall find (if any are to be found) in the Old Testament Scriptures. And of these, all that can be found shall now be adduced. They are scattered at long intervals over this literature of a thousand years, and when brought together must not be regarded in their accumulative, so much as in their separate, force. We must take notice how "few and far between" they are.

The earliest passage bearing on our subject is what is called the *translation of Enoch*. In Genesis v. 24, we read that "Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God took him." Brief and obscure truly this record is! It stands among a long catalogue of what are called "the

generations of Adam" (or the genealogy from Adam), in which the names of Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, are successively registered, with the number of years they were severally reputed to have lived; and of each it is simply added, "And he died." But when we come to Enoch, the son of Jared, this sameness of repetition is broken by the intelligible encomium upon his virtuous life, that "he walked with God," and by the less clear intimation of something remarkable having happened in the manner of his departure out of life, that "he was not, for God took him." The passage is obscure in itself; and some understand it merely to mean that he died comparatively young (interpreted perhaps as a sign of God's love to him, and so implying the belief of another life); for his age is set down at 365 years, among those inconceivable ages of 962 Jared, 895 Mahalaleel, 910 Cainan, 905 Enos, 912 Seth, 930 Adam, 969 Methuselah, 777 Lamech, which immediately precede and follow. It is as when we record a death at 36, among a list of ancestors and descendants who lived to 90 and upwards. But the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews plainly shews us what further interpretation came in the course of time to be put upon the record; for he says, referring to it, "By faith Enoch was *translated* (*μετερέθη*) that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had *translated* him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Heb. xi. 5.) This translation or transference (not mentioned in the original history, but inferred by general Jewish belief afterwards, and expressed in the Greek version of the Septuagint) was understood to have been a special and exceptional removal of this virtuous patriarch from life to immortality, somehow differing from the usual transition, or translation, of death. And it is thought by some, that this exceptional event may have been divinely

designed as a hint of the future life of men in general,—a casual glimpse, as it were, behind the dark veil. Were it so, it seems strange that it should never have been alluded to in the subsequent Jewish Scriptures as having that meaning. The allusion in the Christian Epistle to the Hebrews does not make its appearance till 3000 years after the mysterious departure of Enoch from the world. We must leave the matter in its own uncertainty. The older Jews do not seem to have inferred much from it; indeed, if the fact was as generally supposed, so special and strange a translation could hardly have been felt as a ground for believing in the immortality of men in general, though it would have been a great thing to have the thought suggested credibly at all.

Another trace of the thought of immortality in the early pages of the Old Testament, is much more perceptible in the phrase under which, from Abraham's time downwards, we find death customarily described. In the divine vision it is said to Abraham (Gen. xv. 15), "Thou shalt *go to thy fathers* in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age." And the phrase, *gathered to his people*, or *gathered to his fathers*, is used in speaking of the deaths of Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Moses and Aaron, and holds its place thenceforth, as a recognized Jewish expression, through the books of Judges, Kings and Chronicles. Now we naturally ask, What did these Hebrews mean by speaking of those who were dead as "*gathered to their fathers*"? Why was it not simply said, He was buried in the tomb of his fathers, if that was all that was meant? And why was it still said, He was gathered to his fathers, when (as in the case of Ishmael* and others†) he was buried remote

* Gen. xxv. 17, 18.

† Joseph's body was embalmed in Egypt (Gen. l. 26), and carried afterwards into Canaan (Exodus xiii. 19); was he not considered to

from them? In the books of Kings the phrase shews itself, "He slept with his fathers;" and his burial is mentioned separately.* Did not this expression tacitly imply the belief that those fathers were alive to welcome the last-departed spirit? No other meaning seems sufficient for its explanation. Whether the hope thus expressed was the mere dictate of human nature itself, hesitating, doubting and fearing, yet loving and yearning,—"the secret hope, the fond desire, the longing after immortality;"—or whether the better knowledge of the true God enjoyed by these patriarchs, indirectly encouraged a belief in his power and goodness as extending also to a life to come;—and whether the history of Enoch contributed to this belief or not;—there the belief is—latent, though not very active —trusting calmly, though not enthusiastically believing and aspiring, in the phrase with which, when they committed the body to the earth, they gathered the man to his fathers.

In the same way we may read the next phrase,—the only other of importance to our subject in the books of Moses,—a very interesting passage, as having been referred to by Christ himself in connection with this question of the future life. The belief is, we again say, latent in the words, though not active; it is fairly implied in them as their central thought, if we will really think out all that

have been gathered to his fathers till the latter period? In Judges ii. 10, all the generation which had come into Canaan under Joshua, are declared to have been "gathered unto their fathers," their fathers of the last generation having been buried in the desert, and previous generations in Egypt.

* David (1 Kings ii. 10) "slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David" (which his fathers never owned). Of Rehoboam, (1 Kings xiv. 31) it is said appropriately to the third generation buried there, "He slept with his fathers and was buried *with his fathers* in the city of David."

they suggest. They have this meaning, if they mean anything real. Christ quoted these words of the book of Exodus (ch. iii. 6, 16), and commented upon them, as follows: "And as touching the dead, that they do rise,—have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living." (Mark xii. 26, 27; and similarly in Matthew and Luke.) Now it is quite possible that one might read the history of Moses at the bush, where the Almighty gives him his commission to redeem Israel from slavery, declares himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and proclaims his own name Jehovah (*He who is and was and will be*), the Eternal, as the seal of the Lawgiver's mission;—one might read this history without perceiving in it any clear allusion to a future life, or any direct assertion or proof of it. The whole purpose of the scene is indeed something different; there is no clear allusion to a future life; no assertion or proof of it. Yet who can impugn the logic of Christ's most acute inference from the words, "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob"? He is not (Christ argues) the God of the dead, but of the living;—his relation to Nature is that of Life-giver, of Creator and Preserver. To man He is God as bestowing life and power, reason, conscience, affection and divine aspiration. He is not God to dead matter or to non-entity. If God is still God to those who are dead, then the dead live or will live. If his relationship to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, be not merely a thing of past history,—if He is indeed, as He declares Himself to Moses, ages after they are gone, still their God, it must be that they still live; He is God to those who live, not to creatures who have ceased to exist.

This is Christ's argument against the Sadducees, who denied the future life and paid little respect to any of the Jewish Scriptures except the books of Moses. He tells them the belief is latent in those books; involved, enshrined in them. Not every Jew had felt it to be there in the days of Moses; or the belief would have been more conspicuous in their subsequent literature. But there it is, as the germ of the oak in the acorn. Give it opportunity to grow, soil and water, light and air and space,—it will become an oak-tree. Let Christ but touch the germ of faith involved in this national phrase, *God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob*; and he abolishes death, and brings life and immortality to light from its cerements.

This is all that can be said for the doctrine of a Future Life as hinted in the books of Moses. He certainly did not make that belief a distinct principle of his religion. He did not sanction his laws by pointing to another life; but (leaving that thought as Nature breathed it) he enacted temporal and national sanctions as the specialties of his religious and political system. In the narrative of his death (which he distinctly anticipated and announced), neither he nor his historian alludes to the idea of immortality.

The historical books of the Old Testament, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings and Chronicles, contribute nothing to our subject beyond their frequent use of the accustomed beautiful and touching phrases, already mentioned, "was gathered to his fathers," and "slept with his fathers." Kings live and die, and their merits and demerits are recorded by the historian. Prophets, some of the most remarkable of the Jewish prophets, Elijah and Elisha, prophesy without ever alluding to a future life,—though Elijah's recorded departure from life is not unlike the translation of Enoch, and may possibly be regarded by

some as giving another glimpse, as through another rent in the dark veil of Eternity. (See 2 Kings ii. 1—12.)

Of the book of Job, it should be borne in mind, that it is essentially a discussion on the ways of Providence, in which Job's friends maintain the vulgar doctrine that all human sufferings (and therefore those of Job) are judgments for sin, and Job denies the truth of this customary assumption, and would, if he could, explain Providence more fully. It would therefore be natural, nay inevitable, for him, if he believed firmly in a future state, to refer to that belief prominently and distinctly, as throwing most important light upon the question of Providence. In chapter xiv., there is a passage in which the question of a future life actually presents itself to his thoughts. Lamenting the brevity, feebleness and afflictions of human life, he points to the tree that is cut down and seems even dead, but sprouts again, as in painful contrast to man's hopeless decay :

There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will
sprout again ;
And that the tender branch thereof will not cease.
Though the root thereof wax old in the earth,
And the stock thereof die in the ground,
At the scent of water it will bud
And send forth boughs like a young plant.
But man dieth, and wasteth away ;*
Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he ?
As the waters fail from the lake,
And a flood decayeth and drieth up,
So man lieth down, and riseth not again ;

* Some translate, "and is gone for ever;" the margin of the Authorized Version has, "is cut off." The connection implies hopeless contrast with the tree.

Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake,
Nor shall they be roused from their sleep.

Then he wishes for death, as a release from suffering ; but soon checks himself with the thought, " If a man die, shall he live again ? " and can only resolve to bear to the end : " All the days of my service I will wait, till my change come." And the chapter ends as hopelessly as it began.

There is, however, another very remarkable passage in the book of Job, which is usually taken as expressing the belief in a future life. It is a passage of very difficult translation and doubtful meaning, as our Authorized Version shews by the many *italics* inserted in the text, and the alternative translations given in the margin (xix. 23—27) :

O that my words were now written !
O that they were printed (inscribed) in a book !
That they were graven with an iron pen and lead
In the rock for ever !
For I know *that* my Redeemer liveth,
And *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the
earth.
And *though* after my skin, *worms* destroy this *body*,
Yet in my flesh shall I see God ;*
Whom I shall see for myself,
And mine eyes shall behold and not † another ;
Though my reins be consumed within me.

The passage has been translated as follows :

I know that my Vindicator (or Deliverer) liveth,
And that at length he will rise up over the dust ;

* The margin has : Or, " *After I shall awake, though this (body) be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God.*"

† Or, " *a stranger.*" The words in italics are not in the Hebrew.

And after my skin hath been thus torn,
Still from my flesh I shall see God
[Or, Without my flesh I shall see God],
Whom I shall see on my side,
And mine eyes shall see, but not estranged from me.
My reins are consumed within me.
[Or, For this my soul panteth within me.]

When competent translators can variously represent Job as saying, I shall see God *from my flesh*, and *without my flesh*, it must be left doubtful whether he meant to express his belief that his vindication would be made in the present life, or in another. Some think he means, he shall surmount his loathsome disease and bless God from a healthy body. Others think he anticipates special restoration from death to this mortal life. The essence of the passage is, to express Job's confidence that the living God will at last vindicate his integrity from all suspicion. And if we may take the conclusion of the story in aid of our interpretation (where Job is vindicated by restored and increased worldly blessings), the reference to a future life as a key to Providence in this must appear very doubtful, to say the least.

From the book of Psalms we can bring several beautiful passages which seem fairly to imply that the writers had some hope or belief of a future life. The following are among the strongest :

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow
of death,
I will fear no evil, for thou art with me ;
Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me (xxiii. 4).

But some would translate "a valley of death-shade" (which is indeed literal); some, "the darkest valley," understanding trouble or affliction, but not necessarily death.

Again, in Psalm lxxiii. 23—26, we have these devoutly trustful expressions :

Nevertheless, I am continually with thee ;
Thou holdest me by my right hand.
Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel,
And afterward receive me to glory.
Whom have I in heaven but thee ?
And there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee.
My flesh and my heart faileth,
But God is the strength of my heart and my portion
for ever.

In Psalm xlix., the writer speaks thus of them “that trust in their wealth and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches” (7—12, 15—20) :

None of them can by any means redeem his brother,
Nor give to God a ransom for him,
That he should still live for ever and not see corruption.
For it is seen that wise men die,
As well as the fool and the brutish person ;
They perish, and leave their wealth to others.
Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever,
And their dwelling-places to all generations.
Nevertheless, man being in honour abideth not ;
He is like the beasts that perish.

* * * * *

But God will redeem my soul from the power of Hades,
For he will receive me.
Be not thou afraid when one is made rich,
When the glory of his house is increased ;

For when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away,
 His glory shall not descend after him.
 Though while he lived he thought himself blessed
 (And men will praise thee when thou doest well to
 thyself),
 He shall go to the generation of his fathers
 Who will never see light again.
 A man that is in honour and hath not understanding
 Is like the beasts that perish.

Psalm xvi. is a song of gratitude and self-dedication from one who feels that "the lines have fallen to him in pleasant places" (8—11) :

I set the Eternal always before me ;
 Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.
 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory (my tongue?)
 rejoiceth.
 My flesh also shall rest in hope
 That thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades,
 Neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see cor-
 ruption.
 Thou wilt shew me the path of life ;
 In thy presence is fulness of joy,
 At thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.

One can hardly doubt (though some scriptural critics do), that these, and perhaps some few other, passages in the Psalms imply, as their most obvious and satisfactory explanation, the hope, if not the confident belief, of a future life. But one must be also struck with the fewness and feebleness of such testimonies in the book of Psalms as a whole. One must be struck with the strange absence of all such allusions in various psalms written on occasions of affliction and sorrow, and even of prospective death, when it would be impossible for a Christian believer to

avoid expressing with thankfulness his hope of a future life. How could a Jewish poet avoid such allusions on such occasions, if he actively believed the doctrine? We must bear in mind, too, that the book, though consisting largely of the psalms of David, includes a great variety of others by many writers both earlier and later than his day. We have therefore, represented in this book, the highest devotional thought and feeling of Jewish poets for many centuries; and we find it contains no more than three or four, not absolutely clear, allusions to the life to come. It was the belief of some, but probably not of many;—the hope and desire perhaps of many;—but not even the thought of all.

The book of Proverbs can scarcely be regarded as proving that its author (or authors) practically believed in a future life. His precepts are wise, and many of them very elevated and noble, while some are simply worldly and prudential. He speaks finely of Wisdom, which with him is another name for Religion—for intelligent and devout religious principle—the theory and practice of duty to God and man. But his moral precepts are never fortified by any appeal to the sanctions of a future life. The promises of the heavenly Wisdom to her disciples are: happiness in the present state of being; health, long life, riches, honours, and a good name living and dead.

And the same judgment, essentially, must be in fairness pronounced upon the book of Ecclesiastes, written by Solomon, or else in imitation of his thoughts and style; the subject of which may be described as an *inquiry into the true good of man*,—into the objects of human desire best worth pursuing. It is a very curious book, not always clear in its meaning, nor always quite consistent with itself—for want perhaps of this very perception of the relation of human life to immortality. There seem to be, as it were,

two voices speaking, one in hopeful religious tones, the other in tones as cheerless ;—so that some critics have imagined it a kind of dialogue or discussion. But if the writer meant to represent such a discussion, he has failed to make it clear which opinion he in each case holds and which he rejects. He often speaks very despondingly, often sceptically, sometimes (we almost think) sneeringly, of human life and its pursuits, making it out to be, in his favourite phrase so often repeated, *all vanity and vexation of spirit*. He touches upon the event of death several times, and is strangely inconsistent in what he seems to say about it. He reiterates that “all go to one place;” “one event happeneth to all;” “there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever;” “and how dieth the wise man ? As the fool” “That which befalleth the sons of men” (he further says) “befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast; for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward (or, whether it goeth upward), and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth ? Wherefore I perceived that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works, for that is his portion; for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him ?” (Ch. ii. 15, 16; iii. 19—22.) These expressions seem thoroughly dreary and hopeless. But elsewhere (at the end of the book most especially) the writer speaks more trustfully: “The dust shall return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” And his “conclusion of the whole matter” is unexpectedly religious and trustful: “Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man; for God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret

thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil" (xii. 7, 13, 14). So mixed and fluctuating is the sentiment of the book of Ecclesiastes. Not only the thought of a future life, but the devout and practical belief of it, is here plainly expressed; yet it is as plainly doubted or denied in another mood of the same writer's mind. True type of the state of Jewish knowledge or belief on the subject! Proof exhibited in this one curious book, how flickering and uncertain, though not wholly dark, was the Hebrew hope of the life to come; and how welcome to all the most religious minds of that nation would be the advent of a prophet who could throw the light of divine promise upon these human hopes and misgivings, and fully irradiate the life beyond!

The next developement of thought on the future life among the Jews, has already been incidentally traced in our Chapters on the Babylonian Captivity and on the books of Daniel and the Apocrypha. (See Part I. Ch. vi. and x.) Certainly the belief gained strength from their contact with the Persians, and expressions that fairly imply it are pretty numerous in their later literature. Yet the earthly futurity of Judaism seems a more prominent subject of hope than a future life. By some, the growth of the Jewish belief in a bodily resurrection is referred to the Babylonian period.

[CHRISTIANITY.] We thus come down to the testimony of the New Testament, where the familiar names Pharisee and Sadducee represent the chief diversities of prevailing opinion in our Saviour's time, in reference to which we must more directly interpret some of his contributions to this all-important belief.

The Pharisees (as is well known) were the most popular sect, the largest sect by far, and represent the general belief of their day. Their ceremonialism, spiritual pride, intolerance, hypocrisy and worldly ascendancy, are part of the great fact that their religious belief or profession was the

popular one. The Sadducees were a smaller sect, including the more thoughtful class, the more philosophical, the less conspicuously religious ; perhaps we ought to say, the more sceptical. The former, not content with observing the ceremonies prescribed by the Law of Moses, were equally zealous for a multitude of traditional observances. The latter not only rejected tradition, but scarcely acknowledged the authority of the Hebrew Scriptures beyond the five books of Moses. The belief and disbelief of the two classes on the subject of the future life and certain connected doctrines of spiritual existence, are concisely described by the writer of the book of Acts in these words, on a certain occasion in the history of Paul : "The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit ; but the Pharisees confess both," that is, both the resurrection of mankind and the existence of other spiritual beings. (Acts xxiii. 8.) Josephus, himself a Pharisee, gives a corresponding statement : "The Pharisees believe that souls have in them immortal vigour, and that under the earth there are rewards and punishments for those who have pursued virtue or wickedness in their life ; and that for the latter an everlasting prison is prepared, for the former the power of living again." "But the doctrine of the Sadducees is, that the souls die with the bodies." (*Antiq.* B. xviii. ch. i. § 3, 4.) Elsewhere he describes the doctrine of the Pharisees as being : "That all souls are incorruptible, but that the souls of good men only are removed into other bodies" [seeming to imply a kind of transmigration], "but that the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment." (*Wars*, B. ii. ch. viii. § 14.)

It is observable, on comparing Josephus with the writer of the Acts, that the former does not use the word *resurrection* in describing the Pharisaic belief in a future state. His Greek culture probably led him to avoid that word as

seeming to imply a *bodily* resurrection, which many of his sect held, derived probably from the Persians.*

A third Jewish sect, the Essenes (much smaller than either of the others), according to the testimony of Josephus in connection with the passage last quoted, held the inherent immortality of the soul: "That souls are immortal and continue for ever, and that they come out of the most subtle air, and are united to their bodies as to prisons, into which they are drawn by a certain natural enticement; but that when they are set free from the bonds of the flesh, they then, as released from a long bondage, rejoice and mount upward. And this is like the opinion of the Greeks," &c. (*Wars*, B. ii. ch. viii. § 11.)

In the Gospel history of the raising of Lazarus (John xi.), the sister Martha seems to express the current Jewish belief when, in reply to Christ's words, "Thy brother shall rise again," she said: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." The most natural interpretation of her words is, that they speak the general hope of the religious Jews for a restoration of the dead in the expected kingdom of the Messiah at what they vaguely called the last day. Perhaps our Lord's own words also, in the house of the chief Pharisee with whom he had been invited to eat, would be interpreted by his hearers in the same sense, when he said: "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind; and thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed *at the resurrection of the just.*" (Luke xiv. 13, 14.)

But it is of great importance to observe that this belief in a resurrection was very vague and undefined as to its *supposed physical attributes*; just as we have seen it in the

* See Alger's *Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life*, P. ii. ch. vii. viii. Philadelphia. 1864.

Greek Jewish books of *Wisdom* and the *Maccabees*. Though a restoration to life on the earth may have formed part of it, at least in some minds, in the time of Christ, yet the fact of a future life was believed with a confidence not extending to the supposed details. The misleading phrases so common in modern theology, "*general resurrection*," "*resurrection of the body*," and "*resurrection of the flesh*," are not to be found in the New Testament. There we have the more modest and more spiritual belief expressed by the phrase, "*resurrection of the dead*," or "*from the dead*." And Josephus, as already remarked, is yet more reserved when stating to his Gentile readers the Pharisaic belief, avoiding even the word *resurrection* altogether. Does not Jesus Christ appear to have used that word as simply equivalent to *restored or continued life in death*? If this was the case (as the present writer thinks), all the materialistic questions that have been debated respecting the bodily identity of men in a future state, are simply irrelevant to Christianity as taught by Christ. And so too are many speculations as to the spiritual characteristics of a higher life, and its personal identity with the present, irrelevant to Christian belief, however interesting to metaphysical philosophy. They are not settled by Christianity; perhaps they were not consciously touched by its author or his apostles when, in speaking of a future life, they used the phrases of their day with such delicate caution and reserve. By *resurrection from the dead*, they meant the renewal or continuance of *being*, not of body. This is the essence of the Christian question; as indeed it is (if men would think so) of the human, and therefore of the philosophical question. It is, as it was with Socrates, a question of the *immortality and identity of the man*, not of his bodily form or mode of existence. If we know more about the mind and its powers than the old Greek sage did, and therefore dogmatize less

than he did about its uncompounded nature, pre-existence and power of separate existence, we ought all the more to respect the reserve of the Gospel on these matters. When one of his disciples asked Socrates how he wished to be buried, he replied : "As you please ;—that is, if you can catch me,—if I do not slip from you." And then, smiling quietly, he added :

"I cannot persuade Crito that the expression *I* means the Socrates who is now talking with you and arranging what is said. He thinks *I* am what he will soon see as a dead body ; and so he asks how you must bury *me*. And all that I have been saying this long time to shew that, when I have drunk the poison, I shall remain with you no longer but depart hence to the happiness of the blessed, I seem to have said to no purpose so far as he is concerned, though endeavouring to comfort both you and myself. Pledge yourselves therefore to Crito to the contrary of what he offered on my behalf with the judges, for he offered security that I should be forthcoming ; you must vouch to him that I shall not remain here but go quite away when I am dead ; so that Crito may the better bear it and not grieve for *me* when he sees my body being burnt or buried, as if *I* were suffering something dreadful, nor say at my funeral that he is laying *Socrates* out, or carrying him to the grave or burying him. For, be assured, my excellent Crito, that such inaccurate speech is not only careless in itself, but does harm to our minds. But you must be of good cheer, and say you are burying my *body* ;—and bury it as you please, and as you think most agreeable to the laws." (*Phædo*, ch. lxiv.)

The purport of this quotation is to suggest to my readers, that Christians have as much need as Crito had, to divest themselves of bodily or materialistic habits of thought in reference to what Christ teaches of the future life. As *I* and *me* in the discourse of Socrates did not imply the bodily conditions of his mortal existence, though to the

minds of some of his disciples they did through mere passive habit; so Jesus Christ speaks of the *resurrection* in the purer sense of future or continuous life after death, without implying any of the Jewish beliefs or fancies respecting bodily restoration. *Resurrection* was the current phrase to denote the future life. As such Jesus used it. And on one remarkable occasion, when the Sadducees endeavoured to cast ridicule upon his doctrine by their cunningly imagined case of the woman who had had seven husbands, he shewed them most gravely, what Socrates had hinted playfully, that the difficulty arises altogether from unworthy, materialistic ideas of a future life in the mind of the objector or doubter. "Ye do greatly err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God. For, in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." And then he argued for the resurrection of the dead from the passage in which God is represented as calling himself "the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob." (Matt. xxii. 29—32.) None of the Jews believed that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, had returned to life on earth; yet all except the Sadducees believed them to be alive in another state of being. And Christ argues that they must be so, if God is still their God; and expresses that belief by the phrase, "*that the dead are raised.*" Resurrection from the dead means, when he speaks of it, life after death; it does not assume or define the *how*, or *when*, or *where*. The Gospel has no "physical theory" of a future life.

I think this observation of great importance towards preserving the Christian idea of a future life, and its evidence, from being confounded with the perplexing theories often joined with it in theological creeds, in philosophical speculations and in common belief. The Gospel doctrine dentifies itself with none of these things, though it has

of course, been mixed up with them all in turn by their respective advocates, whether consciously or not on their part.

It ought not indeed to surprise us if, even in some of the words of Jesus Christ, as reported by his Jewish disciples, an occasional tinge of temporary and local thought were perceptible. In their reports of his prediction of the End of the Age and the Coming of his Kingdom, we have (in a former Chapter) noticed this as strongly marked. And perhaps the wonder is that, in his reported sayings which have reference to a future life, there is so little admixture of the Jewish thoughts of the narrators. Still there is, we must grant, just so much verbal difficulty and obscurity in various places, as to make it important that we investigate the subject, not in the spirit of mere verbal criticism, but rather in the spirit of Christ's own mission. That mission was, as we take it, a continual *revelation of Life*, not merely as being the promise of life beyond death, but rather as a manifestation of the spiritual and eternal life which begins to be developed in us at present, and which, because it is man's true life now, is therefore his "eternal life." Jesus Christ reveals this, not merely nor chiefly by words of argument or assertion about the life after death, but yet more when he quickens the spiritual life in man on earth, and makes him feel the immortal in him; when he teaches a morality which is appropriate to man as immortal, but absurd and impracticable on the alternative of this life being his all; and when in his own personal career he manifests the true life of the spirit, that is (in our modern phrase) the highly developed intellectual, moral and devotional life. The eternal life, in this sense, begins on earth, especially under Christian influences, and its renewal and perpetuity then seem beyond doubt.

What contribution, then, let us ask, has Christianity made to our belief in a future life?

It cannot be denied that the belief has grown and prevailed wherever the Gospel has been professed. It has been uniformly regarded as one of the essentials of Christian faith. No Christian has seemed to doubt it. The belief has been as unquestioning in Christendom as it had before been languid and halting in Judaism and Heathenism. St. Paul expresses the claims of the Christian revelation on this subject, by saying that Jesus Christ "hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." (2 Tim. i. 10.) And no description or definition could be more appropriate or intelligible. It declares that Christ has made the future life incomparably more clear and credible than ever it was before. It does not say he was the first to believe in it and inculcate the belief. It does not disparage or slight the glimmering faith of former ages; it only declares Jesus Christ to have thrown a fuller, clearer, purer light upon the all-important question. Death is declared to be "abolished," not literally, of course, but virtually, effectively, so far as it is neutralized in the mind, made to be no longer oppressive and cheerless to the thought;—no longer the assumed or feared extinction of human existence. The Epistle to the Hebrews, with similar meaning, says that Christ came, to "deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 15.) In this way, in this sense, he has abolished death, bringing life and immortality to light. He has made the future life an object of reliable conviction, of vivid faith.

Is it necessary here to set aside certain popular exaggerations and distortions of the truth that Christ has laid open the future life? Some theologians speak as if his Gospel had not simply revealed, but had *caused* a future life; as if mankind had been naturally mortal and hopeless in death till Christ came (or till he rose from the dead), and

as if from that time forth the human race (or Christians, or the Elect, as is variously supposed) had become immortal. Surely this is a strange perversion of the idea of "bringing immortality to light." The *revelation* of a future life as a fact to the minds of those who were earnestly inquiring, hoping and conjecturing, variously believing and doubting, is what Socrates and Cicero and the other pupils of Nature yearned for. It was already, or else it was not, as matter of fact, among the provisions of the Almighty for mankind,—whether discoverable or not by them, whether revealed to them or not. Revelation does not alter the facts of the Divine government by declaring them; it only enlarges our knowledge of those facts. There is, or there is not, a future life. Does Christianity help us to know it? We thankfully believe it does; but believing so, we do not say, the Gospel has given immortality to mankind or to any part of them; but that it has revealed immortality. It ought not to be necessary to enforce so plain a distinction; but the loose reasoning and looser speech common on this subject make it desirable to clear the ground thoroughly. Christ has brought immortal life into vivid view by his Gospel, and so abolished or neutralized death to the believer in a future state. This is our position.

Let us, first and chiefly, examine the sayings of Jesus Christ himself; and afterwards notice some of the expositions given by his apostles. And we naturally examine first those sayings of our Lord which seem most directly to announce the doctrine; though they are far from forming the whole, or perhaps even the chief part, of his effective instructions on the subject. We have only to quote, almost without comment, such expressions as the following, which are familiar to every Christian, and essentially imply the ideas of future existence and retribution as a prominent part of his Master's doctrine:

"I am the Resurrection and the Life ; he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (John xi. 25, 26.)

"All which are in the graves shall come forth ; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of condemnation." (John v. 28, 29.)

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you : for him hath God the Father sealed. * * The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world. * * I am the bread of life. * * This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life ; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John vi. 27, 33, 35, 40.)

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal ; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. * * For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt. vi. 19—21.)

"When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind ; and thou shalt be blessed ; for they cannot recompense thee ; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." (Luke xiv. 13, 14.)

We need but enumerate the Parables of the Talents, the Ten Virgins, the faithful and wise Steward, the Wheat and the Tares, the Net cast into the sea and its contents sorted, the Foolish Rich Man with his enlarged barns and stored-up goods, Dives the selfish and Lazarus the destitute,—to recal how full the instructions of Jesus are of the ideas of futurity and recompence according to conduct. His last words upon the cross express his own deep personal faith : "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit."

Scarcely separable from this class of utterances are those in which Jesus speaks of the everlasting or eternal life, not as merely a thing of the future, but as now in process

of growth and development. There are many beautiful and emphatic sayings of his, which, if taken as referring solely to a future state, seem strange at least in their phraseology, but which are full of truth and beauty when understood to denote more comprehensively that true spiritual life, which has begun to grow up in the faithful soul already and will never die. "Eternal life" (as we read it) does not mean merely the future state. It is the real life of man, which has already begun in so far as that spiritual growth is quickened, on which the influences of the Gospel shed themselves with approving help. Christ's doctrine we take to be, not simply that after death we shall live forever, but that in so far as we are now leading the diviner life of the intellect, the affections and the conscience, with the felt presence of God in our souls, our eternal life is already begun. It is not merely the life to come, but all the best attributes of the present life as anticipatory of it, that the Gospel designates the eternal life. "God hath given to us (not simply will give) eternal life," says the apostle John; "and this life is in his Son." "He that hath the Son hath life." (1 John v. 11, 12.) Eternity is already begun. It is a present possession to the true disciple of Jesus, not a blessing merely in reversion. "If thou wilt *enter into life*," said Jesus to one who asked him what good thing he should do, "keep the commandments." (Matt. xix. 17.) "This *is* life eternal," he solemnly said in prayer, "that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John xvii. 3.) "I give unto them (my sheep) eternal life, and they shall never perish." (John x. 28.) "He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me *hath everlasting life*, and shall not come into condemnation, but *is passed from death unto life*." (John v. 24.) "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." (John viii. 51.) Jesus Christ

is himself spoken of as living this divine life, as being himself the life, the living bread, and as manifesting the life. "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." (John i. 4.) "The life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us." (1 John i. 2.) Similarly, St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, desires "that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. iv. 11); and to the Colossians he writes: "Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Colos. iii. 3, 4.)

Now the real thought of these and similar expressions can hardly be resolved into the declaration that Christ has revealed a future life as awaiting us after death, though that is indeed the central truth to which all the rest is referable. In revealing a future spiritual state, he has opened our eyes to the spiritual attributes of our present life; and these two great ideas, once gained, act and re-act upon each other in the Christian's faith, making his present life a matter of spiritual worth to him in proportion as he looks upon it as leading to immortality, and making immortality the more credible, nay the more necessary to his belief, in proportion as he realizes the spiritual capabilities of the present life.

In further illustration of the scriptural thought on this great subject, it may be added, that even when the future state is distinctly spoken of, this phrase "eternal life" is used to denote the *happiness* of that state, as distinguished from its punishments, and not simply to express the idea of renewed existence; as in our Lord's solemn sentence: "These shall go away into *eternal punishment*, but the righteous into *life eternal*." Life stands opposed to punishment. Whence that interpretation of the term *eternal*

seems to be justified which regards it as denoting not simply the *lastingness* of happiness or of misery, but rather that *kind* of blessedness and that *kind* of woe which can be lasting, because exempt from the *outward conditions* of our present lot. Thus, again, the eternal life means the spiritual life, understood to be spiritual if it is to be age-enduring, and believed to be eternal because experienced as spiritual. The religion of Jesus Christ, without pretending to change human nature and make it capable of everlasting existence, though incapable before, plainly can and does operate such spiritual changes in it as develope its highest capabilities, educate its best faculties into healthy growth, and quicken the germ of eternal life into beauty, power and blessedness. "This is the record: that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son."

The morality taught by Christ is another branch of his virtual revelation of a future life. The purity of his moral precepts and the high elevation of his standard, have been admitted by unbelievers almost as freely as they have been asserted by Christians. There is no need to disparage other ancient moralists, in order to claim for Christ pre-eminence above them all. We have only to compare their standards and his. Hence an argument is commonly derived for the divinity of the Gospel ethics;—it is part of the same argument to urge (as I do now) that this very high morality assumes, is founded upon, and points to a future life as the central thought of him who inculcated it. Let us recall to mind the customary standard of the world before Christ.

The "cardinal virtues," according to the ancient moralists, were Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance. As Cicero expresses it: "Everything virtuous (*honestum*) arises from one or other of these four quarters: either it is concerned in the perception and skilful application of truth; or in the preservation of human society, and in rendering

to every one his due, and preserving the faith of contracts ; or in the greatness and strength of a lofty and unconquerable courage ; or in that order and moderation of all things done and said, of which self-restraint and temperance are constituents.”*

Prudence, as here defined, is an intellectual rather than moral quality, including most prominently the investigation of truth. But in either aspect it is well represented in Jesus Christ, who in matters of religious knowledge came to bear witness to the truth as he had received it from God, and in point of sagacity or practical prudence was, throughout his ministry among artful and hostile cavillers, as judicious in word and act as he was fearless in the cause for which he at length gave up his life.

But see how the idea of *Justice* is enlarged by Christ’s *golden rule* into active and unlimited beneficence. As explained by Cicero, it includes indeed not merely strict justice (the *suum cuique* and abstinence from injury), but also beneficence and liberality, somewhat cautiously defined according to degrees of natural relationship and social interest. But Christ’s precept is, to love one’s neighbour as oneself; and his rule of action is, “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” To make self-love the guide, the suggestive and the test of social, to make the sense of personal good the measure of duty to others, was indeed a master-stroke in morals. The general adoption of this rule, it is quite certain, would cause the cessation of all social wrongs and the culture of all social virtues in the family, the state and the comity of

* Sed omne quod honestum est, id quatuor partium oritur ex aliquâ : aut enim in perspicientiâ veri sollertiaque versatur ; aut in hominum societate tuendâ, tribuendoque suum cuique, et rerum contractarum fide ; aut in animi excelsi atque invicti magnitudine ac robore ; aut in omnium quæ fiunt quæque dicuntur, ordine et modo, in quo inest modestia et temperantia. (*Cic. de Off.* i. 5.)

nations. The nearest approaches to it in Jewish and heathen ethical writers before and about the time of Christ were these: "Do that to no man which thou hatest,"* "Judge of thy neighbour by thyself, and be discreet in every point,"† "Expect from another what you have done to that other."‡ But these are negative and restraining maxims, rather than active and positive ones. It is one step to make self-love the restraint of social wrong; it is a step far in advance to propose it as a rule for active beneficence. Equally large, and referable to the same test, the personal sense of what is right, in a yet more delicate appeal, is the Christian precept of forgiveness on the sincere repentance of the wrong-doer: "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him; and if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn to thee again, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him." "Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you." These rules reach infinitely further than the cardinal virtue of Justice. That is but a part of the Christian law of Love, which includes active beneficence and forgiving clemency.

For *Fortitude* and *Temperance*, which as defined by Cicero include magnanimity, moderation and control of the passions, we have a full equivalent at least in Christ's precepts of forgiveness already quoted, and in his exhortations to self-control and self-denial, even to "taking up the cross" if required by duty to conscience. The Stoical doctrine that pain is no real evil, is not indeed here; but that those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake are pronounced blessed in inheriting the kingdom of heaven, bespeaks a far higher ideal, while one more accordant with human nature, than Stoicism. And in some other important points of morality the Gospel is almost unique. It has been well

* *Tobit* iv. 15.

+ *Eccl. xxxi. 15.*

‡ *Seneca*, ep. 94.

observed that Christ honours many qualities and conditions of life which are in little esteem among men, and sets light by some others which men are apt to idolize. Thus, his emphatic blessing was pronounced upon the poor, the mourners, the meek and humble, the merciful, the peacemakers, the pure in heart, and those who hunger and thirst after righteousness and are persecuted in its cause. These are qualities of mind and conditions of life that usually command little favour with the secular moralist. As Paley observes : "This certainly is not commonplace morality. It is very original." And we may add, very pure and elevated.

But throughout and beyond all this, the morality of Jesus Christ goes to the source of action in *thought* and *motive*. "Let the tree be good, and the fruit shall be good." "Wo to you, Scribes and Pharisees, who make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but *within* they are full of extortion and excess." "Out of the *heart* proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, theft, false witness, evil speaking ; these are the things which defile a man ; but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man." "Take heed that ye do not your righteous acts before men to be seen of them." "Thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Hence the universality of the Gospel law, reaching to all the springs of action in the soul, and comprehending the whole life. Hence its strictness : "Enter into the strait gate ; wide is the gate and broad the way that leadeth to destruction." Hence its earnestness of self-control, so figuratively expressed that the precept never need have been literalized into absurdity, to cut off the hand and pluck out the eye that tempts to sin. The Gospel has all the strictness of Stoical virtue, without the Stoical insensibility to natural feeling.

One thought more on the Christian ethics. As every

sincere prayer expresses the worshiper's ideal of what his life should be, the prayer dictated by Christ for the use of his disciples is rightly taken as expressing his ideal of morals. And what are the aspirations which we express in using the Lord's Prayer? We approach God as the Heavenly Father of all, hallowing the very name and thought of Him. We pray for the extension of the divine kingdom, for the growing sway of that holy Will which may make earth like heaven in duty and blessedness. As for temporal things, we pray absolutely for no more than is absolutely needful for our bodily life,—for daily bread. We pray for forgiveness, on the implied conditions of repentance and reformation on which we ourselves forgive, or endeavour to forgive, or at least know that we ought to forgive, those who do wrong to us. We pray to be spared the danger of temptation, or to be saved from yielding to it; and ascribe the kingdom, the power and the glory, to the Heavenly Father. This prayer expresses the Christian ideal of morals illumined by devotion. Its daily use is daily aliment to that life of the spirit which is our life eternal.

Now, from this elevated and sensitive morality, an argument is customarily drawn for the divine origin of the Gospel. And it is, in fact, part of the same argument to insist—as I now do—that this high morality implies, assumes and points to a future life as its justification. Jesus Christ, as Teacher of such morals, plainly regarded man as an immortal creature. There are many matters of instruction, discipline and culture, which a wise parent enjoins in the education of his child, with reference to his expected mature life; but which, if that child was never to become adult, would be unnecessary and burdensome attainments, not worth the labour and pain of acquisition. And so, if this life were all, the stricter holiness of the

Gospel morals would be inappropriate to our condition and nature. The morality of secular prudence would then be true philosophy. The Epicurean thought, *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die*, would sorely tempt the soul's great despair. That the Christian legislator has taken so high a stand, is proof that he looked upon human nature in the light of immortality. He inculcates virtues which in a temporal point of view are painful and needless; he enforces them by thoughts not temporal or secular. The explanation and the vindication is, that in the view of the Christian religion man is spiritual and immortal. This is the *raison d'être* of its high ethics.

The same argument expresses itself throughout the life of the Great Teacher, who walked by his own precepts, believed his own promises, and lived the eternal life among mortal men. I do not attempt further to elaborate this argument. The evangelists set it forth in detail, unconsciously but vividly. Christ shewed life to be eternal.

There remains that part of the Christian evidence of a future life which is founded on our Saviour's own resurrection.

It is to be regretted that very unwarrantable arguments are often founded upon that great Scriptural fact. Arguments that are untenable are worse than futile. Christ's resurrection from the dead is often spoken of as a *pledge* and *pattern* of ours. But nature, reason, feeling, all reply that it is not a pattern of human experience in general. Christ "saw not corruption;" and on the third day he resumed his bodily life on earth. But when our friends die around us they see corruption, and do not rise bodily to this life again on the third day. We must not attempt, therefore, to take our Lord's resurrection as the pattern, image or example, of mankind at large. From the nature of the case, indeed, no such pattern could conceivably be

given, either naturally or supernaturally. For nature does not shew us, while we are in this state of being, the state that succeeds it; and, if miracle exhibits to us one restored from the dead, the very statement that this *is* a miracle is equivalent to saying that it is not a model of the ordinary course by which man becomes immortal. We must look for arguments of a different order, to connect the human hope of immortality with the resurrection of Christ. And we may find arguments of no mean order.

The resurrection of Christ is, in the first place, the annihilation of that bold scepticism which says a future life is impossible. Among those, called philosophers, with whom the Gospel in its early progress came into doctrinal conflict, there was a large and influential sect who undertook to deny the possibility of a future life. Into those shadowy realms beyond death, where doubt might have been modesty, they carried a dogmatism of denial not less presumptuous, at any rate, than the dogmatism of assertion, and far more mischievous;—for it was indeed a mischief to all the best promptings of the human soul, to lose even its vaguest longing after immortality, and to please itself with despoiling others of their hope by pressing upon them the heartless interrogatory, “*How* are the dead raised up? and *with what body* do they come?” To such a scepticism as this, a valid answer is found in the fact of Christ’s resurrection. It is objected that resurrection is a thing impossible;—it is replied, Christ at any rate was raised. This is the essence of Paul’s reply to the Corinthian Epicureans: “If the dead (as you insist) rise not at all, then Christ cannot have risen. But, as matter of well-attested fact, Christ did rise from the dead. It is possible then that all the dead may rise; and your dogmatic denial is not true philosophy.”

A general conviction of the almighty power of God

might indeed carry us thus far. We might most reasonably conclude that He who made us *can*, if He will, call us again from the dead. No true Theist could consistently doubt whether this is possible. To have seen the Divine power specifically exerted in the restoration of Christ to life, may seem therefore to suggest somewhat more than the mere removal of the logical doubt whether restored life be possible. And there are seasons in the experience of many, when the doubt suggests itself not in the form of reasoning, but of feeling; when not the intellect, but the affections, confess their inability to retain the faith of more tranquil moments, and futurity seems to the agonized heart—a blank. In such moments especially, one fact may be worth a thousand arguments. No abstract reasoning on the power of God to restore life would so impress the mind as that one history of Christ risen. It is not only the logical reply to speculative doubt respecting the possibility of life from the grave, but the most effectual antidote to the heart's misgivings under the sense of bereavement.*

* See 1 Cor. xv. 12—20. A second part of Paul's argument (often misunderstood and made illogical in consequence) is that beginning at the 35th verse. Having met the assertion that the resurrection is impossible by testimony to it as a fact, he touches the sceptical difficulty, "*how* are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" Where it is to be observed, that he does not pretend to answer *how*, or *with what body*. He says these are *foolish questions*. As well might you demand how a seed grows, and say it cannot grow, because you cannot tell how. Doubt whether a seed *can* have an appropriate *body*, because it is of a sort you never saw before! "God giveth it a body" according to his pleasure; and to thousand kinds of seeds, their thousand forms of growth. Endless are the varieties of life. Beasts, birds and fishes, have their appropriate structures. Earth and sky are full of the Creator's wonders;—bodies terrestrial and bodies celestial. The Creator's power is unlimited. Enough to know He has promised that He will raise the dead;—no need to ask curiously and doubtfully, *how*.

This is the real scope of Paul's argument. He does not say we

When we further consider that a future life was one of the most striking doctrines emphatically taught by our Lord, we naturally view his resurrection as bearing some relation to his previous instructions, and not as an isolated fact. While living, he taught that the dead are alive to God; he proclaimed himself to be "the resurrection and the life;" his precepts of morality were framed appropriately for immortal beings; and he foretold distinctly and repeatedly that he should be violently put to death, and that on the third day he should rise again. The miraculous fulfilment of this very extraordinary prediction is to be taken as the divine sanction of the truths in connection with which he had uttered it. That he rose according to his own prediction, is proof that God was with him, not only in that prediction, but in all that he had professed to teach in the Almighty's name. And by an inevitable association of ideas, his doctrine of life and immortality gains a peculiar sanction from his own resurrection. How fit that he who taught immortality should visibly and specially illustrate it! How appropriate a comment upon his own solemn words does his personal return to life present: "I am the resurrection and the life,"—the preacher of the doctrine and its exemplification! We can only spoil this natural association of thought and feeling by straining it. We miss the analogy by seeking to find identity. We spoil the figure by attempting to make it literal.

The resurrection of Christ further helps our faith by imparting new force to the natural arguments for a future life, and giving new warmth to the natural hope. The

shall rise *as* Christ did, nor *as* the seed grows into a plant. He simply puts aside these materialistic difficulties, and relies upon the Divine power and goodness to fulfil the Divine promise. (May I refer the reader to my *Spirit of the Bible*, Vol. II. p. 412; and *Astro-theology*, Lect. IV., intitled, *Other Worlds and Another Life.*)

Christian can see more numerous and more clear intimations of it in nature and providence, and especially in his own intellectual and moral nature, than he could as a mere philosopher without the revealed hope. The possession of that hope enables him better to appreciate those still shadowy intimations of nature. We can often see a distant object with the naked eye, when its position and appearance have been first defined through the telescope, though we could not discover it before. And the same experience happens to the intellectual as to the bodily eye. Reason can better trace the intimations of God's will in nature, when revelation has suggested what kind of intimations to expect and where to look for them. He who believes the revealed doctrine of immortality sees the natural intimations of it where he might else have passed them by. The faint speck of light in the sky shews itself to be a glorious star. The cravings of his own spirit after truth, virtue, life, happiness, are now more implicitly trusted by him as the divine pledge of immortality and immortal progress.

Let us read some of these natural suggestions again in the light of the Gospel, and see how much more they can teach us than they taught Socrates and Cicero.

This goodly world with all its provisions for the enjoyment of living and sentient creatures, the majestic and beneficent laws which guide its periodical changes, its day and night, its rolling seasons, its varied climates and productions, point upward to some great and wise purpose. All other orders of creatures point to MAN as their lord and superior, if not by services actually rendered, yet at least by yielding up their claim even to life before the progress of human population and industry. Nature echoes the sentiment of holy writ, that Man is the image of his Creator, as being lord of his other works on earth. Human

beings are evidently the great growth of this world ; human life is plainly its great purpose ; human character, discipline, developement, its great office. There is nothing higher, greater, better, than these results effected in this part of God's universe. Natural religion says plainly, Man is the principal growth of this earth.

Is he, then, upon this earth, a completed growth ? Is his developement here a completed work ? Is our life here conducted to a result; or is it broken off in the midst of a process ? Is it *a whole* in the eye of our own reason,—that reason by which we are permitted to catch glimpses of the purposes of the Almighty Maker ?

To answer this question, let us distinguish a little more carefully. The individual life may complete its *natural cycle*, and expire in extreme old age ; or it may be cut off before that natural cycle is fulfilled. Take the former case (the rarer one indeed), as in the eye of natural religion presenting, if any case does, the appearance of a completed work and satisfied purpose. The bodily frame has gone through all its natural and beautifully appointed changes, growing through infancy, childhood and youth ; maturing in manhood and middle age ; gently declining as “the sere and yellow leaf” in autumn ; and gently, gradually sinking through the second feebleness of age into the sleep of death. “Lo, here,” say the pupils of Nature—some sadly, some wilfully, some few perhaps with the hollow exultation of argumentative triumph over the heart’s hope—“here is a completed cycle, an accomplished growth, an object attained and done with. It is like the round of the seasons, to be followed by other seasons, but not the same again ; it is like the growth of a tree, or a plant, or one of the lower animals, to be followed by other trees and other plants and other animals, but the individual tree or plant or animal to be no more.” Is this, then, a true analogy ?

As regards the *bodily* life of man, we cannot deny it. As regards the body, the analogy seems perfectly correct. The individual body perishes, and its particles enter in succession, no doubt, into various other material combinations. But our question is as regards *the mind* of man, his intellect, his affections, his character. Has the mind too fulfilled the whole round that is possible to it under the necessary conditions of its formation? Is it incapable of further thought or emotion, because the bodily system with which it has thus far been connected is worn out? We know no decay of the *mind*, except as dependent upon that of the bodily senses and powers. Nor is the former by any means proportionate to the latter. How often is the mind bright as ever in decline and death! We must not allow an argument which belongs to our spiritual consciousness, to be beclouded with difficulties which have only to do with material philosophy. Nay, the philosophy of matter can itself help us to a truer argument.

In the material world, it is quite understood and acknowledged that *no particle is ever lost*. The plant, the tree, the animal frame that has died in the individual structure, goes through various transformations into other bodies, animate or inanimate. Even during its individual existence, indeed, its particles have been continually changing, some being thrown off continually into other forms of being, others continually acquired into its structure. The individual thing becomes, as the philosophers tell us, decomposed, but not one particle is destroyed; they only enter into new forms of existence.

Then what becomes (if we may reason analogically from the lower to the higher), what becomes of all those *conscious faculties*, imperceptible to sense, which have been connected with the bodily frame through its natural life? That bodily frame passes into new forms, but not a particle of it is lost.

The spiritual faculties—what becomes of them ? Do they pass into other forms ? Are they resolved into their spiritual particles, into atoms of thought and feeling ? Does one mind's consciousness pass away from it into another mind ? Do portions of knowledge or emotions of love, given forth from one mind to another, cease to be the possession of the first ? All our consciousness denies this analogy between mind and matter. The mind (whatever we may know, or not know, of its subtle essence) does not, we are quite certain, thus resolve itself into particles and enter into combination with new minds. The mind is consciously a whole, a being, a person, not communicable by separation of parts. None of us has consciousness or memory of ever having been a constituent part of any other conscious being. Then what becomes of the spiritual faculties when the body dies ? Can we jump to the conclusion that they are annihilated ? They, the highest, worthiest part of the human growth, for the service and developement of which all the rest was manifestly organized and preserved ? If we were to strain the analogy, we ought to believe (as just hinted) that the spiritual results cannot be lost, though separated, decomposed and going into the formation of other spiritual growths. Their annihilation is quite beside the argument. And if their annihilation does not follow from the decomposition of the body which they have so long tenanted, surely it is most rational, most accordant with our consciousness of the worth of those powers within us, to believe in their continued existence as constituting the same individual being still.

Thus we meet the difficulties of natural scepticism on its own ground ;—that ground is, consciously or unconsciously, materialistic. But, from the higher ground of our *spiritual consciousness*, what do we think of human life thus going out with old age ? Do we recognize any *law of our minds*

by which, as is the case with the law of our bodies, a limit is necessarily set to the continuance of their vital being? Is there any necessary limit beyond which our minds must be incapable of another act of reasoning, or of emotion, provided they be endowed with a new bodily constitution, or placed in such a state of being as to be independent of a bodily constitution? Are not the limitations of the mind's activity in the present state chiefly, if we may not say altogether, those which the bodily constitution imposes, in the claims of rest and sleep, and in the disqualifications of sickness, disease, weakness, decline? Does not the mind often bravely, and sometimes dangerously to itself, contend against these bodily limitations, and so give us a clear consciousness of its separableness at least from the bodily existence with which it is now connected?

Look, again, at this completed earthly life of the aged:—is it, spiritually considered, an intire and finished thing, as the bodily life is? What is the end, the purpose, for which this human being has lived through his four-score years, or yet more, and from which he is now released? Was its purpose *happiness*,—the happiness of the individual (as we rationally believe in the case of all the lower creatures, according to their various degrees and kinds of enjoyment)? Was happiness the purpose for which this human life was created? A far higher happiness, doubtless, it has tasted than belongs to the lower creatures; and yet therein doomed also to special suffering; the happiness strangely, sadly, wofully mixed with care and sorrow, wretchedness and anguish, such as we can hardly believe to have been designed for the mere sweetening and zest of its blessings by occasional contrast. What then has been the real object of this human life of four-score years? Its experience seems to bear the character of *discipline* more properly than of happiness, directly and primarily. And why of

discipline, unless with views still unfulfilled, but in process of fulfilment? Discipline in childhood, whether at the hands of the human parent or the Divine, might have been the due preparation for the best happiness of manhood and age. But why, then, discipline still, more searching and influential, all through strong manhood and through sinking age itself, unless these be the childhood of our immortality? Why discipline still, sharpening even with the power to bear it and to improve it, unless implying that there was still an object in view, extending further and rising higher, to justify the Divine wisdom and benevolence in results still to be realized?

But we have been contemplating the life of the aged, as regards its bodily course a completed thing. If we have found it spiritually thus incomplete, pointing from its aspect of discipline, and looking with its high faculties of action, thought and emotion, to better and better results not yet wrought out, how resistless is the argument from lives not complete even in their bodily aspect, and altogether immature in their spiritual growth! With what a natural prayer does fading childhood cling to the sweetness of this life till it can begin to welcome the thought of a better! What a cry of hope and energy is either smothered in the graves of the young, or (more reasonable as more blest alternative) prevailingly heard by Almighty Love! What precious drops of sorrow, agony and love, have bled from hearts older in life's trials than in its years, going down devotedly to die,—if we could not say rather, going onwards to life eternal! All these things plead loudly for immortality. Our argument does not require that we should claim it on the ground of alleged justice. What are the claims of justice on the part of the thing made to Him that made it! We are reasoning on the belief of a Creator's love. And if this mortal life, in its longest, happiest and seemingly

most complete developement, is taught to anticipate immortality as that for which it is prepared, how much more shall it welcome that precious hope as the balm of its sorrows and the justification of its mysterious discipline! Could we see all these related stages of our existence in that comprehensive view in which they lie outspread before the sight of Him who ordains them, then life would be vindicated in its most perplexing passages; then death would be brightened, and the future made credible, yea necessary, to our faith.

It is highly important to practical religion, that the future life should be always thought of as strictly connected with and rising out of *the present life*. The doctrine of Christianity, that all men will receive according to what they have done, whether good or bad, has its echo in the deepest consciousness of our souls that if we live again it must be as the identical selves who leave this state when we die. Unpractical views of a future life, such as tend to disconnect the thought of its blessedness and woe from our present good and evil actions, are greatly to be deprecated. Its judgments will doubtless be tempered with mercy (as who does not feel that our Heavenly Father's chastenings in this present life continually are?); and its rewards to the imperfect virtues of poor human nature will be dispensed from the overflowing of a Heavenly Father's goodness; but those rewards *do* await and depend upon our virtuous efforts in this present life; and those sufferings *do* await and depend upon our misconduct here. Such a future life is alone in harmony with the duties, the tendencies and the suggestions of the present life. Only under the influence of such a hope, expressly or tacitly felt, does the present life acquire its true character and value; a spiritual use and meaning are given to common things; cares are blest, and troubles made happy, and affections felt to be immortal.

